

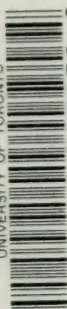
SHAKESPEARE'S

HAMLET CORIOLANUS

TWELFTH NIGHT

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTIONS
AND NOTES BY G. S. GORDON

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO




3 1761 01528658 6

ORD : AT THE CLARENDON PRESS



Presented to the
LIBRARY *of the*
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
by
The Estate of the late
PROFESSOR A. S. P. WOODHOUSE
Head of the
Department of English
University College
1944-1964



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2008 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

SHAKESPEARE'S
HAMLET CORIOLANUS
TWELFTH NIGHT

HENRY FROWDE

PUBLISHER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

LONDON, EDINBURGH, NEW YORK

TORONTO AND MELBOURNE

at St. Noor house 1921.
SHAKESPEARE'S

HAMLET CORIOLANUS

TWELFTH NIGHT

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTIONS AND NOTES

BY

G. S. GORDON

FELLOW OF MAGDALEN COLLEGE OXFORD

OXFORD

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

1911

PR

2807

A2G65

1911



997567

INTRODUCTION

I

SOURCE AND DATE

THE story of *Hamlet* is a legend of the North, the work of the rovers who harried our coasts before the coming of the Normans. It was first made known to the general world by Saxo Grammaticus, or 'The Scholar', in a history of his countrymen the Danes which he wrote about the end of the twelfth century. The story as it appears in Saxo has been thus summarized by Professor Dowden :

The legend of Hamlet.

Horwendil and his brother Feng rule Jutland under King Rorik of Denmark. Horwendil slays Koll, King of Norway, and marries Gerutha, the daughter of King Rorik ; their son is Amleth. Feng, jealous of his brother, slays Horwendil, and takes Gerutha to wife. Amleth feigns to be dull of wits and little better than a beast, while secretly planning vengeance. He baffles the courtiers by riddling words, which for them are nonsense, but are really significant. A girl, his foster-sister, is placed in his way, in the hope that his conduct may betray his true state of mind ; his foster-brother warns him of the snare, and he baffles his enemies. A friend of Feng, 'more confident than wise,' proposes to act as eavesdropper during an interview between Amleth and his mother. Amleth, coming like a cock, flapping his arms like wings, and leaping hither and thither, discovers the eavesdropper hidden under straw, stabs him and brutally disposes of the body. He explains to his mother that his madness is feigned and that he plans revenge, and he gains her over to his side. His uncle sends Amleth to Britain, with two companions, who bear a letter graven on wood, requesting the king to slay Amleth. The letter is altered by Amleth, and his companions are put to death. His adventures in Britain do not affect Shakespeare's play. He returns, makes the courtiers drunk, sets them in hangings knitted by his mother, sets fire to the

enter

palace, and slays his uncle with the sword. He harangues the people, and is hailed as Feng's successor. After other adventures of crafty device and daring deed, Amleth dies in battle. Had he lived, favoured by nature and fortune, he would have surpassed Hercules.

The
legend
and the
play.

Here are the rudiments of the story which we know from Shakespeare. Horwendil is the murdered king, his brother Feng is Claudius, Gerutha is Gertrude, the girl is Ophelia, the foolish-wise listener is Polonius, the outwitted companions are Rosenkrantz and Guildenstern. There is the feigned madness of Hamlet, the baffling of the courtiers, the two interviews, the two eavesdroppings, the voyage to Britain, and the fatal message: everything almost but the method of the end, which is here grotesque but successful. The Hamlet of this story is a strong man, bold and crafty. He does not drown in his own revenge, like Shakespeare's Hamlet. He not only kills his uncle, but supplants him. He is made King of Denmark, and lives to perform feats answerable to his powers. His death, when it comes, comes like destiny. He dies, not because Heaven was negligent, but because Heaven was busy. He was betrayed (so the story runs) by his wife, like his father before him; and having killed one uncle was killed in battle with another. The story, it will be seen, is dynastic. It is a story of the crimes and misfortunes of a corrupt house.* Murder, treachery, and retribution follow each other like the steps of an argument, and at every crisis there is a woman who betrays.

Diffusion
of the
legend.

Saxo's History, which was in Latin, was first printed in 1514. A second edition appeared in 1534, and a third in 1576. In 1570 the story of Amleth or Hamlet was turned into French by the novelist Belleforest, and included in his collection of tales, *Histoires Tragiques*. Belleforest knew his business, for the story is the best thing of the kind in Saxo. From France it came to England: how early it is impossible to say. There is a translation of Belleforest's story called *The Hystorie of Hamblet*, dated 1608. But this is too late for our purpose, and the suggestion that there may have been earlier prose versions may be allowed to concern us when they are found. What does concern

us is this, that as early as 1589 there was an English *Hamlet* on the stage.

Our knowledge of this play is collected from a passage in a The old preface, a querulous preface, written by Thomas Nash to his play of friend Robert Greene's story of *Menaphon* in 1589. It is an *Hamlet*. attack on illiterate upstart playwrights, and used to be regarded as an attack on Shakespeare.

It is a common practise now a daies (he writes) amongst a sort of shifting companions, that runne through every arte and thrive by none, to leave the trade of *Noverint* (i.e. of attorney), whereto they were borne, and busie themselves with the indevors of Art, that could scarcely latinize their necke-verse if they should have neede; yet English *Seneca* (i.e. Seneca translated) read by candle light yeeldes manie good sentences, as *Bloud is a begger*, and so foorth; and, if you intreate him faire in a frostie morning, he will afoord you whole *Hamlets*. I should say handfulls of tragical speeches.

Whoever the particular object may have been of Nash's resent- Its ment (it is now thought to have been, not Shakespeare, but an earlier tragedian, Thomas Kyd), two things are clear: that he history. had written a *Hamlet*, and that his *Hamlet* was popular. Had it not been popular, Nash would have had less to say. We hear of it twice again before the end of the century. It was probably the same *Hamlet* that was acted by Shakespeare's company at the Newington Theatre in June of 1594, and that Lodge, the friend of Nash, referred to in 1596 when he wrote of one who looked 'as pale as the visard of the ghost, which cried so miserally at the theater, like an oyster-wife, *Hamlet revenge*'. The ghost is in the very manner of Seneca,¹ who was famous for these fancies; both the ghost and the exclamation are in the manner of Kyd, his English imitator. When Shakespeare, therefore, produced his *Hamlet*, he produced, according to his habit, not so much a new play as an old play made new. Of his thirty-seven plays at least twenty are of this sort, rehandlings of old favourites. The novelty was in the rehandling. As for novelty of plot, he never cared for it. He like tried themes well seasoned by the breezes of the pit and the battering of hand-claps, the more

¹ Cp. II. ii. 428 *u.*

the merrier. Sure at least of comprehension, of being always followed if not always understood, he could spend his wits freely on his characters, and leave the story to itself.

Shake-
speare's
Hamlet,
1602,
1603.

The first notices of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* are of the early years of the seventeenth century. They show how keen was the competition for printable stuff. On July 26, 1602, James Roberts the printer had an entry made in the Stationers' Registers of 'A booke called *the Revenge of HAMLETT Prince of Denmarke as yt was latelic Acted by the Lord Chamberleyne his servantes*', which is as much as to say, 'The version of *Hamlet* recently acted by Shakespeare's Company.' The book was entered to Roberts for the usual fee of sixpence, and for the usual purpose: to prevent forestalment by another printer. In the following year a quarto volume appeared with this explicit title: 'The Tragicall Historie of HAMLET Prince of Denmarke By William Shake-speare. As it hath beene diuerse times acted by his Highnesse seruants in the Cittie of London: as also in the two Vniuersities of Cambridge and Oxford, and else-where. At London printed for N. L. and Iohn Trundell. 1603.' This is still a play of Shakespeare's company, for the Lord Chamberlain's Servants, as his company had been called, passed into the service of His Majesty in 1603, and became the King's Players or His Highness's Servants. It is the first version of Shakespeare's *Hamlet* that we possess, and a discreditable version it is, bearing on every page of it, as we shall see, the evident marks of piracy. Either Roberts's precautions had been vain, and he had been anticipated, or else, yielding to impatience, he or the publishers for whom he printed had procured a surreptitious and imperfect version by such shady means as were open to them.

Shake-
speare's
Hamlet,
1604.

The probability is that he was anticipated. Certainly some one, he or the author, was roused to action. For in the following year there appeared a Second Quarto, thus entitled: 'The Tragicall Historie of HAMLET, Prince of Denmarke. By William Shake-speare. Newly imprinted & enlarged to almost as much againe as it was, according to the true and perfect Coppie. AT LONDON. Printed by I. R. for N. L. and are to be sold at his shoppe under Saint Dunstan's Church in Fleetstreet. 1604.' I. R. is James

Roberts, and the insistence on the great superiority of this edition shows that the intention was to kill its predecessor in the market. The title does not insist without good reason. In spite of careless printing, this second version is immensely superior to the first in all the virtues of accuracy and fidelity, and is literally almost twice as long. It has fifty leaves, the other has thirty-two. The advantage in length was partly due to time. In the year's interval, as we shall see, the author had enlarged his play. The advantage in sense and accuracy was evidently due to this, that the second version was printed (as the first was not) from a regular copy regularly obtained.

The Second Quarto *Hamlet* is substantially the *Hamlet* which we know. The four reprints which appeared between 1605 and 1637 are chiefly important as evidence of the public taste.¹ Few tragedies were ever so popular. The ghost, the soliloquies, the mad Prince and love-crazed maid fed London for years with catchwords. Even the version of *Hamlet* in the Folio of 1623, the first collected edition of his works and the standard edition of most of his plays, varies from the Second Quarto of 1604 only as one good version will vary from another. They are independent, but they are versions of the same original. The Folio *Hamlet* is much better printed, and is shorter. It omits many passages contained in the Quartos, and contains some passages which the Quartos omit. The difference, we may imagine, was the result of experience. As Goethe observed, the play has something of the amplitude of a novel, and twenty years of acting had discovered what might go and what might stay. The version of 1604 is nearer to what Shakespeare the dramatist wrote; the version of 1623 is nearer to what Shakespeare the actor-manager put, after trial, upon the stage. The two together, since we are readers not actors, make up the modern *Hamlet*.

Our conclusion may be briefly stated. There was an old play of *Hamlet* known and popular as early as 1589. It became one of the plays of the Lord Chamberlain's Servants, Shakespeare's company, and was acted by them from time to time throughout

¹ The 1605 *Hamlet* or Third Quarto is loosely called a reprint. It is simply the 1604 issue with the date changed.

the nineties. Early in the next century, about 1601, Shakespeare took the play in hand and revised it. The taste of playgoers had improved under Shakespearean tuition, and the popularity of the crude old tragedy may have shown signs of decay. This first revision is represented, however imperfectly, by the First Quarto of 1603. Incited by the revived popularity of the piece, having got *Julius Caesar* off his hands, and conscious of the further possibilities of such a character as Hamlet, Shakespeare returned to his revision about 1603, and working with a freer hand, produced the finished *Hamlet*. This is substantially the *Hamlet* of the Second Quarto of 1604, and, with acting omissions, of the First Folio of 1623. We date *Hamlet*, therefore, between 1601 and 1603, and we ask how much of *Hamlet* may be traced to the old play, and how much to the reinventive genius of Shakespeare. This is a question of the greatest interest. It implies a consideration of Shakespeare's dramatic methods. To answer it will be the purpose of the next section.

II

THE TWO VERSIONS

The
Hamlets of
1603 and
1604.

WE are now to examine the two versions of *Hamlet*, the version of 1603 and the version of 1604. The second *Hamlet* is Shakespeare's. How far may this be said of the first? The second *Hamlet* is a revision. By what strokes of art was the revision made? Victor Hugo declared, when he had translated both versions, that to compare them was to 'penetrate the very heart of the poet's thought and surprise genius in the workshop'. If this be so the comparison must be made.

The
making of
the 1603
Hamlet:
piracy and
error.

The first version, or, as scholars call it, the First Quarto, is very inaccurate and incomplete. No one who had the second version would ever care to read the first for itself. It is full of errors, errors of hearing and copying, but mostly of hearing. It was set up, no doubt, according to the piratical practice of the time, from shorthand notes taken down in the theatre and afterwards transcribed. Of the numerous verbal errors that disfigure its pages, 'Martin' for 'matin', 'half heart' for 'comfort', 'guyana' for

lost *Hamlet* whose history on the stage I have already described. I think it has also been made out that this earliest *Hamlet* was the work of Thomas Kyd, the author of *The Spanish Tragedy* (1585-7), the most popular and most parodied play of the former age: a play so popular and profitable that Ben Jonson himself, who continued to laugh at it for all that, did not disdain a commission to revise it in 1601. Like *Hamlet*, it is a play of revenge. Hieronimo, Marshal of Spain, plots vengeance through four Acts on the murderers of his son. Like *Hamlet* it has a ghost, and a 'mousetrap' play by which the murderers are startled out of their secret. Like *Hamlet* it is a play of madness. Its hero is delirious, circuitous, abounding in self-reproach, a 'waster of unfruitful words'. The resemblance between the plays was noted. They are spoken of together by contemporaries, and sometimes confused. 'Hamlet, Revenge!' and 'Hieronimo, Revenge!' were used indifferently as catchwords. The explanation is that Kyd planned his *Hamlet* on the same lines as his *Spanish Tragedy*. Much was already done for him by the old story. What he did not find he added, with the eye of an expert for stage effects. All this Shakespeare took over. He too had laughed, like the rest of the world, at the tragic rant of old Hieronimo. His braggart Pistol, in *Henry IV*, talks Hieronimo language as a thing made for him. But we must not forget that Shakespeare's own *Hamlet* was parodied in later years, because it was admired and because every one had seen it. This is a penalty which most dramatists are willing enough to pay, for it is the penalty of success. It is the penalty of striking situations and striking words. Kyd was a master of both, within the type of tragedy which he chose for his own, the melodramatic tragedy of revenge.

When Shakespeare took over Kyd's *Hamlet* he showed his usual perception of public taste, and when he set to work to alter it, altered, we may be sure, as little as he could. In the craft of playbuilding he was no revolutionary. Our frivolous notions of originality, the passion to have everything 'all one's own', never troubled him. He had a kind of thrift or natural economy, such as good housewives have, and good artists. He liked to take some old thing and surprise it into life. He would keep the old

Shake-
speare's
revision of
Kyd.

walls standing and make a palace of them. We need not be astonished, therefore, to find that in his first version, and even in his second, he kept more than Kyd's outline, some of his words as well as his situations. This has been proved, so far as such things are capable of proof, for the first version. I wish to suggest that something of Kyd's diction may be found imbedded in the second version also, in the version which we read.

Remains
of Kyd in
Acts I, II.

It is plain that in his first version Shakespeare worked more thoroughly on the first two Acts than on the other three. The first two read like Shakespeare; the others just miss reading like some one else. Even in the first two there are pre-Shakespearean sounds. I cannot think that Hamlet's outbreak in i. v. 92 is the pure product of Shakespeare's mind:

O all you host of heaven! O earth! What else?
And shall I couple hell?

This is the very style of Hieronimo, and to me it spells Kyd. 'And shall I couple hell?' How Pistol would have mouthed it! I think also that the greater part of Hamlet's letter to Ophelia is un-Shakespearean. It has always puzzled Shakespeare's readers by its curious ineptness and lack of all the qualities of Hamlet's mind. It was kept, I think, the rhymes especially, as something familiar and of a likeable absurdity, something that old playgoers would smile to recognize, a folly of their youth. This is the point of Hamlet's apology for his halting lines, that the thing was old-fashioned and of the former age.

The play-
scenes in
II. ii and
III. ii.

The play-scenes in II. ii and III. ii are more difficult to explain. Both are meant to be in an older style, to have the crust of time upon them. Since this was their object, the first must be allowed to have attained success. It is stiff with years, and crackles in every joint. Once again, it is to be observed, we have the commentary of the newer age. Hamlet halts at 'mobled' (II. ii. 534). How this first specimen was put together, whether Shakespeare worked on Kyd or spun its archaism afresh, it is impossible to say. The second is more easy. It is an expansion of the version in the First Quarto, and the version in the First Quarto I conjecture

to be Kyd's, for reasons of style which are open to every reader who will look first at III. ii. 167 f., and then at such lines as these, part of another debate, from Kyd's *Cornelia* :

Tis not for frailtie or faint cowardize
That men (to shunne mischaunces) seeke for death ;
But rather he that seeks it showes himselfe
Of certaine courage gainst incertaine chaunce.
He that retires not at the threatoes of death,
Is not, as are the vulgar, slightly fraied :
For heaven it selfe, nor hels infectious breath,
The resolute at any time have stayed,
And (sooth to say) why feare we, when we see
The thing we feare less then the feare to be ?
Then let me die, my libertie to save ;
For tis a death to lyve a Tyrants slave.

It should be observed that in rewriting this play-scene Shakespeare deliberately archaized the opening, to suit, I suppose, the archaism of the earlier play-scene in II. ii. Instead of

Full fortie yeares are past, their date is gone
he wrote
Full thirtie times hath Phoebus' cart gone round
Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orbed ground, &c.

(III. ii. 167-8).

which is very ancient brocade indeed. The rest, like Kyd's, seems modern, not only by comparison, but in itself. Such lines as

For 'tis a question left us yet to prove
Whe'r love lead fortune or else fortune love

or
(II. 214-15).

And hitherto doth love on fortune tend
For who not needs shall never lack a friend

(II. 218-19).

might almost have been written in the eighteenth century.

There are fewer fragments of the old play in the later parts of *Hamlet* than might have been expected. The Clowns, I think, in v. i were in Kyd's play. Their conversation before the entrance of Hamlet might be as old as Shakespeare's boyhood. The interview between Hamlet and his mother in the First Quarto is also old, and un-Shakespearean. I speak now not of any difference of

The Clowns,
Hamlet's
interview
with the
Queen, &c.

fact but of diction and sentiment. Even Professor Dowden, who thinks that the whole of the First Quarto is Shakespearean, has to confess that these lines at any rate are from a ruder hand :

Look you now, here is your husband,
 With a face like *Vulcan*.
 A looke fit for a murder and a rape,
 A dull dead hanging looke, and a hell-bred eie,
 To affright children and amaze the world.

This is that indiscriminate abuse of the villain which is the soul of melodrama. It is so indiscriminate as to be contradictory. For it is impossible that Claudius can have looked like that and been also the 'smiling' and 'sugar'd' rogue of Hamlet's and his mother's descriptions. Shakespeare, in his complete remodelling of the scene, discarded these lines, but remembered Vulcan. We have 'foul as Vulcan's stithy' in III. ii. 89. There is, finally, one passage in the First Quarto of which Shakespeare made no use, and which he probably did not write. It looks as old as anything in the play. It is about clowns, and is indeed very stupid, however true it may have been. If Shakespeare had kept it, its place would have been at III. ii. 50. I print it, as it should be printed, in prose.

And then you have some agen, that keepes one sute of jeasts, as a man is knowne by one sute of apparell, and Gentlemen quotes his jeasts downe in their tables, before they come to the play, as thus : Cannot you stay till I eat my porrige ? and, you owe me a quarters wages : and, my coat wants a cullison : and, your beere is soure : and, blabbering with his lips, and thus keeping in his cinkapase of jeasts, when, God knows, the warm Clowne cannot make a jest unlesse by chance, as the blind man catcheth a hare. Maisters, tell him of it.

It is probable that this was out of date by 1603, along with the jokes which it catalogues. It may have been for the same reason that the bout of jargon between Hamlet and Osric (v. ii. 110 f.) appears only in the Second Quarto. By 1623, when the Folio appeared, it was past its date, like the wit of Gilbert's *Patience* in our own time.

We are now acquainted with all the stages in the composition of *Hamlet*. It remains to inquire by what strokes of dramatic art the final *Hamlet* was achieved. In the first two Acts, as I have said, there are few changes. So far as bad reporting permits, the first and final versions are almost agreed. They differ, however, even here, in the thoroughness with which Hamlet's character is conceived. To work out the character of Hamlet at all hazards, though the play should crack for it, was the first motive of Shakespeare's final version. We miss several things, therefore, in these first two Acts. We miss, in the first version of I. ii, those brief utterances and cryptic asides, that harping on one string, that tragic peevishness which more than anything else in the early appearances of Hamlet, more than his inky cloak and nighted aspect, more even than his soliloquies, betray the tragedy of nerves. We miss also in the first version those lines in I. iv. 23 f., where, speaking with the force of his thirty years, Hamlet denounces the 'one defect' which defeats so many fine characters among men. This speech, it should be observed, is addressed to Horatio, who is much more employed in the final version in the quality of confidant and friend. By confiding in Horatio he enlightens us, and relieves soliloquy. So solitary a figure as Hamlet must soliloquize if we are to understand. But soliloquy is a device of which drama soon grows weary. This is Horatio's opportunity and the propriety of his part. You may see it most clearly in III. ii. 68 f., which is new in the final version. Here Hamlet takes Horatio boldly for his own. Here we learn for the first time what it was in Horatio that raised him to this level in Hamlet's regard and made him the chosen man in a court of intriguers and time-servers.

The two
versions
compared.
Hamlet
and
Horatio.

Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
And could of men distinguish, her election
Hath seal'd thee for herself; for thou hast been
As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
Hast ta'en with equal thanks; and bless'd are those
Whose blood and judgment are so well comingled
That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
To sound what stop she please. Give me that man

That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee.

Hamlet chose him, as so many men choose their friends, for his unlikeness to himself : because he was free from that ' one defect ', a man self-contained, erect, above Fortune, beyond ambition, in whom the elements of passion and judgement swayed equal. That Hamlet's friendship was pleasant to Horatio we cannot doubt ; but that he was surprised or elated by it is more than we can say. He is the only person about the court who keeps his wits in the presence of Hamlet, who is at ease with him, and unafraid. He is so because he is the only person about the court who has nothing to lose. He seeks nothing and therefore cannot be disappointed. He is the kind of man whom men of genius call friend, the world cannot tell why ; the kind of man whom it is good to sit with, though nothing be said ; a man of a quiet mind. In the rude and sentimental North he appears like ' an antique Roman '. ' I am more an antique Roman than a Dane ' (v. ii. 355) He is more Roman than Brutus, whom that wild genius Antony praised as Hamlet praised Horatio,¹ and more worthy of that praise because he is without cause or party.

The two
 versions
 compared:
 Hamlet
 and the
 Queen.

The most important change in the final version, as I have said, concerns the Queen. Indeed, the two interviews between the Prince and his mother might be made a test of the difference between the two versions. In the first version Hamlet is merely wild, a young man who stamps, rails, sees a ghost, and kills Polonius for a whim. The calmness of the Queen gives accent to her son's extravagance. When it appears that her calmness is the calmness of innocence Hamlet's fury goes out like a wet match. He can do nothing but take his leave. The final version is in a different key. As Hamlet's deadly eloquence peals and swells in our ears we lose all hold of the platitudes of daily life, so that the death of an old man or so becomes a matter of passing and even trivial concern. The Queen has neither

¹ ' His life was gentle, and the elements So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up And say to all the world, " This was a man ! " ' (*Julius Cæsar*, v. v. 73-5).

III

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

THE tragedy of *Hamlet* is the greatest of English tragedies and the best known. It has a magic name. Every Englishman has an idea when you say 'Hamlet' to him: 'Mad,' 'Father's Ghost,' 'To be or not to be'; if you consider it, an excellent summary. There is neither theory nor puzzle in it. Now *Hamlet* is become a nest of both. Its popular
repute.

Why is this? Why, when we are all agreed about the greatness of *Hamlet*, should we agree so little about its meaning? Differ-
ences
about its
meaning. Because it is as subtle as life and touches the secrets of destiny. It is personal, therefore, to every reader; and as readers differ in their lives and destinies, so they differ, and will continue to differ, in their views of a play which seems to embrace them all. We sit down to write about a play and in five minutes we are writing about ourselves. Finding, each of us, something of Hamlet in ourself, we hasten to endow him with the rest of our personality. Every man, therefore, has his own *Hamlet*, and (such is human nature) every man says that it is Shakespeare's. What *Hamlet* means to us, that, we confidently assert, *Hamlet* meant to Shakespeare. This is the virtue and the snare of great literature. Nothing could be better for us. The benefit to *Hamlet* is more doubtful. For the play is pestered with meanings, and has had, indeed as many interpreters as there are critics.

The perplexity does not end there. People differ not only Its
puzzles. about the meaning but about the events of the play, about what really happened. Was Hamlet mad, or was he only pretending? Where was he when the murder was committed? Was he studying at Wittenberg? Why was he studying at Wittenberg? Why at Wittenberg? Why anywhere at his age? Was he indeed fat, or was it only Burbage who was fat?¹ Did he take exercise? Was he really and truly in love with Ophelia? How much did his mother know? There is no end to these questions. Whether most of them should be asked or not is another matter. Questions

¹ Cp. v. ii. 301 n.

which Shakespeare has nowhere answered were plainly not intended to be asked. Nor is it easy to see who else can answer them. But they are asked. Learned doctors ask them. The gravest writers have fallen in love with them as grave men fall in love with chess. They appear in Appendixes. They are become part of the study of *Hamlet*. Shall we answer them? The first and the last but one we shall answer in time. The last we have already answered. The rest we shall dismiss, as unmeaning.

Hamlet
the centre
of the
play.

The first thing to do, in discussing a problem, is to simplify. I propose, in this part of my Introduction, to simplify the problem of *Hamlet*. There is only one way. It is to consider Hamlet first and always, and to consider nothing else except in its relation to Hamlet. The play is as varied as life, but its variety cannot hide this truth that there are in it simply two things: a Person and a Situation. This Person is Hamlet. Everything else is Situation. Circumstance, nothing more. The King and Queen, Horatio and Osric, the Players and the Clowns, the whole Polonius family, exist only for the Prince. They have, as we see them, no self-existence. Take away the Prince and their parts vanish, like spirits at cockcrow. This is the simplification of which I spoke. That it should be so easy among so much variety is the first testimony to Shakespeare's art. It is the one indispensable mark of a work of art that the centre of it is simple, however much the fulfilment may be complicated. 'Thus, in *Hamlet*, the grotesqueness of the grave-digger, the flowers of the mad girl, the fantastic finery of Osric, the pallor of the ghost and the grin of the skull are all oddities in a tangled wreath round one plain tragic figure of a man in black.'¹ Let us look at this figure in its setting.

The true
position of
Hamlet
urged
against
Coleridge.

The ordinary view of *Hamlet* comes from Coleridge. It was the opinion of Coleridge, and therefore of the nineteenth century, that the central thing in *Hamlet* is a problem of conduct; that Shakespeare's chief purpose in writing the play was to exhibit a character in which reflection fatally prevailed over

¹ G. K. Chesterton in *The Innocence of Father Brown*, p. 92.

the principle of action. This is a false opinion, which time will destroy. What we see in *Hamlet* is not a moral problem, but a tragic situation ; not a problem of character, but an experiment of fate ; not a problem of conduct, but the agonies of a soul. Hamlet, when we first see him, is in the full height of a great family affliction. In a man so placed we do not generally look for exhibitions of the science of conduct. The old Inquisitorial way of putting a poor fellow on the rack, and demanding, in the midst of his tortures, that he should settle the great questions of life, was never thought to be the way of nature. When a great affliction comes upon a man Society is accustomed to leave him to himself. Conduct and action are the last things expected of him, or indeed desired, because any action which a man may take at such a time is likely to be as wild and disordered as his grief. If, in this time of disorder, he do nothing, Society is not such a foolish philosopher as to infer that the man has a character in which reflection prevails over the principle of action. Society says, the man is not himself.

This is the situation of Hamlet. We never see the normal Hamlet. The first blow has struck him—his father's strange death and his mother's indecent marriage—before he enters. He is sick and heartbroken already, though controlled. Two scenes pass, the second blow falls, and shatters his frame of life. From this moment he knows neither peace, nor love, nor hope. He is stunned ; but it is not the demand for action that has stunned him, as Coleridge thought ; it is the horror of what has happened. The demand for action does not stun, it only stings him. It makes him cry out when he might have brooded. His fits of self-reproach are not to be taken, as Coleridge took them, for truthful indictments of his character. When a man in Hamlet's situation reviles his own person Society again is sensible and refuses to hear. The most active and decisive of men may be the most peevish of invalids, and the fullest of self-reproach ; and Hamlet is an invalid in every nerve. His frenzies are the frenzies of a man who finds himself disabled for action at a time when he has responsibilities to act. To infer, like Coleridge, that his disabilities were born with him, that his incapacity for action

His state
of mind.

was natural and innate, is as much as to infer that all invalids were always ill, or that every man on crutches was born a cripple. Are you going to stun a man, and then say, with Coleridge: Here is 'a person to whom the external world is comparatively dim'? Forget the critics and it will seem to you that all of us, in our degree, must have thought and suffered much like Hamlet. We should not have spoken so well, without Shakespeare's help, but dumbly or with groans we must have pursued those trains of thought. We also might have looked at the bright sky, and contrasted it with the sudden joylessness of life. Hamlet does this in a passage of such splendour as only Shakespeare could have lent him. But our 'sky' and his 'canopy' are one. We also might have thought of suicide, as Hamlet did, and dimly groped into the question of a Hereafter. Hamlet's language is again beyond us, but his thoughts are not. Hamlet is not an abnormally constituted man acting in an abnormal way. Hamlet is each one of us. He is abnormal only in his circumstances and in the scale on which he is drawn.

*Hamlet on
the stage.*

Coleridge's opinion, when it was first expressed, was a novelty in England. Goethe had said something like it in his *Wilhelm Meister*, but Goethe at this time was unknown to most Englishmen except by name. We are asked to suppose, then, that Coleridge was the first English writer who grasped the meaning of a play which had been read and acted with applause since the reign of James. To suppose this would be to lampoon two centuries. After Falstaff, Hamlet was by far the most popular of Shakespeare's characters upon the stage. The play was even acted at sea in the early days. Captain Keeling, master of the *Dragon*, bound with the *Hector* under Captain Hawkins towards the East Indies, records that on September 5, and again on September 31, in the year 1607, his crew gave the tragedy of *Hamlet*. 'I envited,' he says, 'Captain Hawkins to a ffish dinner, and had Hamlet acted aboard me: w^{ch} I permitt to keep my people from idleness and unlawfull games, or sleepe.' The character of Hamlet was the chief part of the two best tragic actors of the seventeenth century: Burbage and Betterton. When Burbage died, in 1619, Hamlet was thought to have died with

him. When Betterton acted Hamlet, even Pepys's little eyes forgot to be critical, forgot to look at the ladies in the boxes, and gazed spellbound like the crowd.¹

That this popularity continued in the eighteenth century there is no reason to doubt. It was the play that Partridge was taken to see.² It was the play that Voltaire tried to translate. The Ghost in *Hamlet* became a model to Europe of what a ghost should be, and Hamlet himself the profoundest expression of the Gothic genius of England. Yet no one discovered, in all this time, that the play was simply a problem in the psychology of conduct; the question, as Coleridge puts it, of 'the prevalence of the abstracting and generalizing habit over the practical'. Still less did any one discover that Shakespeare's chief purpose in writing it was 'to impress upon us', as Coleridge puts it elsewhere, 'the truth that action is the chief end of existence.' Such problems and morals, I am sure, were never in the minds of Captain Keeling's sailors when they acted the play twice in one month. They are the last sort of problems to trouble a sailor. Such problems, I am sure, never worried Pepys, as he sat entranced by Betterton's acting. It was not the spectacle of these very adult problems that pulled the eyes out of Partridge's head. Even to the moral Johnson it never occurred to reduce the play to anything so formal and problematic as this; and indeed the tragedy of Hamlet, the height and horror of the circumstances in which he stands, are all wasted if this was all. If this was the heart of the play, what was it, we must ask, that delighted England for two centuries? If Coleridge was the first man in England to understand the play, how did England contrive to enjoy it so thoroughly for two centuries without understanding it?

Its continued popularity, and conclusions therefrom.

Coleridge and his followers were deceived by some things and were blind to some others. They were deceived by this, that Hamlet enjoys no such privacy as a man in his situation

Hamlet's need of privacy.

¹ 'No succeeding tragedy for several years got more reputation or money to the Company than this' (Downes, *Hist. Review of the Stage*, 1660-1706). 'The best part, I believe, that ever man acted' (Pepys, *Diary*, Aug. 31, 1668).

² Fielding, *Tom Jones*, bk. xvi., ch. 5.

might have expected to find. He enjoys none of the privacy which I have shown to be the natural medicine prescribed by Society in such a case as his. Even such scanty privacy as he does enjoy from his compatriots is no privacy to us. We see and hear him when he is most alone. We are permitted to spy upon such agonies as in real life we should not dare to witness. To judge from these exhibitions what the normal character of Hamlet was like, to judge from these moments of abandonment whether he could act or not, is to perform a piece of folly which we should never contemplate in real life. The want of privacy made his agony the greater. Self-abandonment is difficult in a court; and he was watched. This was the reason of his feigned madness. It was an expedient, and it served two ends. It covered a strangeness of manner which he could neither conceal nor control; and it gave an outlet for his distempered thought. The feigning, we may suppose, was easy. In the course of his mental agonies he must often have touched the boundaries of madness. To all this Coleridge was mercilessly blind. Believing as he did, though most strangely, that Hamlet was placed in 'the most stimulating circumstances that a human being can be placed in', circumstances which obliged him 'to act on the spur of the moment', he could see nothing but procrastination in the efforts of Hamlet to clear his mind about the world and think things out. Of the device itself there is much that might be said. It was not invented by Shakespeare. The feigned madness of Hamlet is as ancient as the Vikings. It came to him by inheritance, from the old play. It is not even essential. A modern dramatist would say nothing about madness. He would give the whole tragedy of Hamlet and keep Hamlet sane. Misanthropy, distaste of life would explain all. But in these matters Shakespeare was old-fashioned. He kept the device, as he kept everything that might be put to use. It was Hamlet's 'nighted cloak', to shroud him from the impertinences of a court. Finding solitude impossible he made a solitude in public. Men fell back when the mad Prince appeared, and watched, and said nothing. Every attempt to address him and draw him into talk is planned beforehand, as if it were an expedition. He ceased to be account-

His
feigned
madness.

able for what he said, and was enabled, therefore, even when he spoke, to pursue his thoughts without discovery. Shakespeare, I believe, meant us to see that nothing but this grotesque relief could have saved his madness from becoming real.

I said that *Hamlet* was not so much the study of a temperament as the study of a tragic situation. Let us examine the situation more closely. A son, already shocked by his father's sudden death, disgusted by his mother's second marriage, and irritated at the frustration of his natural ambitions (for he was heir to the crown), is stirred to the depths by a supernatural message from his father, his idol among men. This brings to a head two feelings already in some ferment: disgust at the part of women in the world, and rage at the ineffectiveness of his position and the rusting of his powers. The command of his father is one which he cannot refuse. He would do anything for his father. But the circumstances are such as to bring into question the foundations of life. It is not the mere business of revenge that perplexes him. He is as capable of doing this in a heat as any man. The whole basis of the family is upset, and he must rake among the ruins before he can act. He must think things out. He must be resolved on the question of the use of living at all. Why act, if all action is part of a vain and disgusting show, corrupt from the first institution of men and women, from the first parents? Had his uncle alone been concerned, Hamlet would have behaved very differently. But his mother is concerned also: how much or how little he does not know. It is this, not the call to stab, which 'palsies him o'er'. An active administrative man, you may say, would have collected proofs. But there were none, except the word of a ghost, and no one heard that word but Hamlet. He might, then, have addressed himself to the people, and relying on his greater popularity might have dethroned his uncle and dealt with him as he liked? But it was more than a public matter. It was a family scandal. The honour not only of his house but of humanity was concerned. His mother was in it. These were the 'stimulating circumstances' in which Hamlet was placed. These were the circumstances in which he was obliged to act on

The situa-
tion of
Hamlet
surveyed.

Why he
did not
act at
once.

the spur of the moment'. Why on the spur of the moment? His father, after all, was dead. His mother, after all, was married. The situation was morally past cure, irremediable except by the hand of God, a case for the next world. Why, then, this cry about immediate action? There was not only no need for such action (though Hamlet in his wildness naturally talks as if there were), but no action that could be taken could make things better. There was revenge, of course; and this, I suppose, is what Coleridge describes as 'being called upon to act by every motive human and divine'. Hamlet could satisfy revenge; but he could no more heal the situation than he could call his father back from the dead or undo his mother's frailty. He could only pile one dead body on another. It is the feeling of this (for Hamlet felt it if we do not) that guides him on his strange sidling progress through the play. Now this feeling is the feeling of Fate.

Hamlet as
an instru-
ment of
Fate.

It was remarked by Johnson, and it has been repeated by every one since, that Hamlet is throughout the play rather an instrument than an agent. 'After he has, by the stratagem of the play, convicted the King, he makes no attempt to punish him, and his death is at last effected by an incident which Hamlet has no part in producing.' This the critics put down to weakness of Will. They should have put it down to Fate. It is Fate, > not Will or the weakness of Will, that is the driving genius of the play, and winds it to its end. And this is clear, for there is not an 'agent' in the play. Hamlet is not the only 'instrument'. All the persons in this tragedy are instruments, and all, like Hamlet, are instruments of Fate. The tragic cause is never in Hamlet alone, nor in anything so single as an individual will. It is in the dynasty to which he belongs. He is a member of a doomed house. His position, therefore, as the hero of the play is delusive. It suggests, both to us and to him, that his will is free. But his will is not free. There is nobody in the play whose will is free, except Horatio, Fortinbras, and others who stand on the circumference of the action. There is a curse on the family which even the sentinels feel in the first scene, and it swallows them all, murderer, accomplice, revenger, with all their depen-

dants. Hamlet is the hero only that he may suffer and be the last to fall. The Queen is killed through the man who proved her frailty; he by Hamlet; Hamlet by the son of the man whom he had killed in passion; Laertes by the man whom he had planned to kill by treachery; Polonius, Guildenstern, and Rosencrantz, because they were meddlers and crossed the purposes of Fate. The only innocent victim is Ophelia, and yet she was not innocent either in the eyes of Fate. She had one fault. She belonged to a falling house and loved the heir of another. She fell, therefore, with her family, as Hamlet fell with his. This is the tragedy of *Hamlet*, on the lines of life and destiny. This is the tragedy of *Hamlet* as it was understood before the rise of modern philosophy. This is Shakespeare's *Hamlet* and Saxo's. It is grand and primitive, like a tragedy of the elder Greeks. It is something older and finer than the morbid psychology of the critics. It is the *Hamlet* of every uncorrupted playgoer since 1603.

The curse upon his house.

The end of *Hamlet* is not unpleasant to a spectator. There is a reconciliation in Death. It means silence, and the end of gabbling. The public used to think that Hamlet might have been allowed to live. 'Are you then inexorably bent on Hamlet's dying at the end?' inquires Serlo, in *Wilhelm Meister*. 'How can I keep him alive,' said Wilhelm, 'when the whole piece is pressing him to death?' 'But the public wishes him to live.' 'I will show the public any other complaisance; but as to this, I cannot.' Hamlet has even been blamed for being so inefficient as to die. A man of action, it is thought, would have contrived to kill the King without being killed himself. He is blamed also for his treatment of Ophelia. Her death also is put to his account. The answer to such objections is to consider whether it may not be more terrible to survive a tragedy than to share it; to speculate a little on the life which either or both of these persons must have lived on the ruins of their families, and to observe how instinctively the mind recoils from the attempt. It is only in Shakespeare's unpleasant plays, in his later comedies with their heartless jests and bitter laughter, that the forlorn survive. His tragedies are happier. It has been thought that

The death of Hamlet and Ophelia.

Ophelia might have become a Cressida had she lived. There is certainly much in Polonius that resembles Pandarus of Troy, and we are never allowed to forget that Ophelia is her father's daughter. Perhaps if this be admitted it will not appear so unfortunate that she should have died.

Hamlet
and
Ophelia
con-
sidered.

Hamlet's harshness to Ophelia in her lifetime is more difficult to forgive. It is 'what we forgive afterwards, and explain by the whole of his character'.¹ At the time it is cruel, and hurts. But Hamlet was in a mood in which everything was raised to the universal. Court life became life in general; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern became society itself, with its smirks and smiles and innuendoes; his mother's behaviour became not merely a question of husband and wife, parents and children, but a question of man and woman, the whole question of sex. By this light Ophelia is eclipsed. By this light Ophelia ceases to be herself to Hamlet's eye, and becomes mere Woman, but 'the sign of She'. To say that he lost his love for Ophelia is to misstate the truth. It was not that he ceased to love her, but that he could no longer regard her as a person. He saw only Woman in her, and she shared in the disaffection to Woman which possessed his mind. This is how we acquit Hamlet. How are we to acquit Ophelia? Are we to ask everything of Hamlet at his crisis and nothing of Ophelia at hers? Is innocence everything and must everything be forgiven to it? If only Ophelia's innocence had been more intelligent! If she had been less her father's daughter and more herself! If she had had the wit to understand and the resolution to be brave! If she had refused to be a party to deceit, to give up her lover's letters and act the decoy for his betrayers! This was a part which she might have played, if Fate had made her otherwise than she was. So Hamlet felt, and buried himself more deeply in his disaffection. Not that he blamed her. He was far beyond that. He blamed the Woman in her; and thought how well she confirmed him in his speculations. He classed her with his mother, as a younger member of one race.

¹ Lamb, *On the Tragedies of Shakespeare*.

It is usual to pity Ophelia. She deserves it. But what more does she deserve? She is one of the tragic failures in Shakespeare's world, a world where success in love is not given to the merely innocent and loving. All Shakespeare's happy women have wit and spirit as well as heart. His pathetic women have neither. I do not forget the share which Fate has in the disasters of Ophelia; but it is impossible not to see why Shakespeare drew her as he did. We seldom think of her without thinking of Desdemona. Forget, then, for a moment, what the critics have said about the hidden wonders of these women, and think of what they say and do. Remember that they were drawn by the man who drew Portia and Beatrice and Rosalind, and confess that they are failures. A touch of Beatrice or Rosalind and the tragedies of *Hamlet* and *Othello* could hardly have been. Both Ophelia and Desdemona are victims to inexpressiveness. They have lived in a world of dumb ideas and feelings. They have never skirmished with words and pelted wit with men like the bolder women of Shakespeare's comedies. To say that they are less worldly than the Rosalinds is hardly the truth. They have been saved from the world. They have never had to defend themselves in sport, and they are unable to defend themselves when it comes to earnest. They cannot even realize that it is earnest. Let us give up raving, then, about the divine purity, humility, and innocence of these tragic heroines. They are no purer, no more innocent, nor in any true sense more humble than the witty, loving, faithful, happy women of the comedies. They are tragic not from any quality which they possess too good for this world. Such a quality does not exist. They are tragic from defect, because they want what the Rosalinds have got, clear heads and ready tongues as well as loving hearts, the gift to be happy and to make others happy. They can do everything but understand. In ordinary life, I imagine, they were the kind of women whom Shakespeare least liked to meet. Their helplessness, their dependence, their speechlessness weigh upon the mind. They impede the world, these women, clinging about its neck, so that it depends upon the mood of the world, and not upon themselves, as it should, whether their end shall be tragic or not.

The tragic
character
of Ophelia.

Shakespeare felt for them, and if their end was tragic, pitied them, and made them pitiful to others. But the women he admired were the women who carried their destinies with them, and in speaking and thinking as well as in feeling were the equals and superiors of men.

The domestic and heroic in *Hamlet*.

The tragedy of *Hamlet*, as we have seen, is a domestic tragedy. It is also heroic. The persons are royal; there is a background of great affairs. Take away these things and you have, in Goethe's words, 'only a family scene remaining.' The 'great idea, that here a kingly house by internal crimes and incongruities goes down to ruin', would not be presented. Now Shakespeare wished to present this idea. A family scene alone did not content his art. The murder of a man by his brother, who in a month or two marries the widow, and the revenge of the son upon his step-father, is a police-news subject. It is vulgar and sordid. We feel it to be beneath us. It is therefore, as it stands, unfit for tragedy, as Shakespeare understood tragedy, for if tragedy is to do its proper work upon us it should raise and purge our emotions, not stir and depress them. But this is impossible unless the subject be presented so that we feel it to be above and not beneath us. Claudius did kill his brother and marry his widow a month or two later. Hamlet did kill his step-father in revenge. But the murdered man was a king; his widow was a queen; a whole people was concerned in these mutations; and in the final revenge it was not only Hamlet, his mother, and his step-father that fell, but a royal house. Thus the sordid realities of domestic crime are reconciled with the demands of tragedy for great issues and great names.

Shakespeare's methods and the methods of modern drama.

In so reconciling them Shakespeare followed the traditional story and gratified his audience. A modern dramatist would do neither. He would object that when the main issue is plain and simple, when it is domestic and concerns a household, the introduction of other issues in the background is inartistic and interferes with truth. The grander the background, he would say, the more is truth obscured. That may indeed be argued. Of many dramatists who used the same method as Shakespeare it is true. But it is not true of Shakespeare. In following tradition

and gratifying his audience he sacrificed no truth. Everything that is essential is given. Nothing is suppressed. The whole sordid story is there; only it is no longer sordid, because our minds are raised to the scale of a kingdom. Modern playwrights, like Mr. Galsworthy and Mr. Shaw, prefer the scale of a villa, and they are perfectly right, since that is the scale which suits their art. Their object is analysis; their aim is scientific. Human psychology is their study. As they write they think of possible legislation. They limit the scene, therefore, like good scientists; for if you wish to investigate a phenomenon scientifically, the first thing you must do is to isolate it, to guard it from contact. For this purpose your villa is clearly better than your palace, and *a fortiori* much better than your kingdom. To a man engaged in such a task the royalty of Claudius, Hamlet, and Gertrude, and the whole people and monarchy of Denmark, rightly appear disturbing issues. Crime is crime wherever it appears, and it is the crime and the criminals that he studies.

By this method of procedure it is obvious that he must collect more facts than another man who follows the older method of tragedy, with its mixture of interests and themes. For one conversation between Claudius and Gertrude that Shakespeare gives you, a modern dramatist would give you a dozen. You would learn exactly how many turns Hamlet took between the table and the door, and between the door and the fireplace: what he took up, and what he put down. But it may be permitted to suspect that with fewer facts the old method may give as much truth as the new. It certainly lends itself to poetry, which the new method does not. The new method is too neat. It gives a section of life, and asks you to believe that it is the whole. Shakespeare's method is less tidy but more generous and perhaps more true. It reminds one of Tolstoi's advice to a friend on the writing of stories. 'Do not,' he said, 'force or bend to your purpose the events of the story, but follow them wherever they lead you. Wherever life leads, it can always and in everything be lit up by the one light. Lack of symmetry and the apparent haphazardness of events is the chief sign of real life'. This sign is never absent from Shakespeare's tragedies. In all the grand haphazardness

The truth
of the two
methods.

of their events they preserve the generous confusion of life. And the one light burns always.

The
variety of
Hamlet.

It was the opinion of Johnson that if the dramas of Shakespeare were to be characterized, each by the particular excellence which distinguishes it from the rest, we must allow to the tragedy of *Hamlet* the praise of variety. 'The scenes are interchangeably diversified with merriment and solemnity. New characters appear from time to time in continual succession, exhibiting various forms of life and particular modes of conversation. The pretended madness of Hamlet causes much mirth.¹ the mournful distraction of Ophelia fills the heart with tenderness, and every personage produces the effect intended, from the apparition that in the first Act chills the blood with horror, to the fop in the last, that exposes affectation to just contempt.' To examine this variety is beyond our scope. I have been content to indicate how the play should be studied. There is nothing difficult in *Hamlet* but Hamlet himself and the relations in which he stands to the world. When these are understood, everything else, the variety of incidents and the crowd of characters, falls naturally into place. These, therefore, as I understand them, I have attempted to explain. I have spoken at length of Hamlet and Ophelia, of their families, and of the destiny that ruled their fates. I have spoken also, in the last section, of the Queen and Horatio, Laertes and Fortinbras.² I have said something of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern.³ Of the principal characters I have neglected only Polonius, and of the striking subordinate characters only the Clowns.

The char-
acter of
Polonius.

The first idea of Polonius, that he should be an eavesdropping councillor, came from the original story. Shakespeare has only drawn it out. It was inevitable, also, that such a character should be the butt of Hamlet's wit, madness and staidness colliding by a kind of mutual attraction. The result was a stage tradition which lasted for more than two centuries, that Polonius was intended by Shakespeare to be a solemn buffoon, and should

¹ This surprises us now, but it was the stage tradition and it was not wholly false. We often laugh at what Hamlet says, and we were meant to laugh.

² See pp. xvii-xx.

³ See pp. xxix, xxx.

be represented as a buffoon accordingly. Against this Johnson first raised his voice. His judgement is one of three which have been passed upon that unhappy old man. Goethe pronounced upon him, and Coleridge, and all to the same effect, against the stage tradition. Of the three the first and best is Johnson's, which I will quote. Polonius, he says, 'is a man bred in courts, exercised in business, stored with observation, confident of his knowledge, proud of his eloquence, and declining into dotage. His mode of oratory is truly represented as designed to ridicule the practice of those times, of prefaces that made no introduction, and of method that embarrassed rather than explained. This part of his character is accidental, the rest is natural. Such a man is positive and confident, because he knows that his mind was once strong, and knows not that it is become weak. Such a man excels in general principles, but fails in the particular application. He is knowing in retrospect, and ignorant in foresight. While he depends upon his memory, and can draw from his repositories of knowledge, he utters weighty sentences, and gives useful counsel; but as the mind in its enfeebled state cannot be kept long busy and intent, the old man is subject to sudden dereliction of his faculties, he loses the order of his ideas, and entangles himself in his own thoughts, till he recovers the leading principle, and falls again into his former train. This idea of dotage encroaching upon wisdom, will solve all the phenomena of the character of Polonius.' So luminous a statement deserved to be quoted. No actor who had read it could ever again with a good conscience play Polonius like a fool. I cannot help thinking, however, that Shakespeare was partly to blame, and that Polonius is more foolish, more boastful, and more rambling in the later scenes than his appearance in the third scene would lead us to expect. Shakespeare took pleasure in writing his admonition to his son, and made it finer than it need have been or than he perhaps intended. He took pleasure in making him foolish in the later scenes because Hamlet must have a butt. So in *Love's Labour's Lost* the affected Armado, who is introduced as a Spanish grandee, ends up a buffoon, and makes sport in Navarre by fighting a duel with a rustic, in his shirt.

(see
II 1.)

The
grave-
diggers.

It is with no intention of incivility to Polonius that I speak first of him and then of the Clowns. The matter has arranged itself. Much has been written about these Clowns, and the genius of Shakespeare who could turn two grave-diggers to such grim and spectral ends. They are the only workmen in the play, and they speak with the voice of their class. We learn many things from them: that people will talk about their betters though they should hang for it, that there is one Christian law for gentlefolks and another for the commons, that the first gentleman was Adam because he held a spade, that grave-diggers build the strongest houses, that one can sing at grave-making and that grave-makers and liquor are no enemies, that a tanner will last you nine year in the earth, that all Englishmen are mad, and that Hamlet was thirty when Ophelia came to her grave. First Clown is at home in his yard. He plays the host, and welcomes all comers. He has beds for all. He is as shrewd as Hamlet on mortality: only 'the hand of little employment hath the daintier sense'. Hamlet has more language and a quicker pulse, but the slow wisdom of the earth is in the digger of graves. His grossness is the grossness of humanity, which keeps us sane. Hamlet's speculations, if more than momentary, would drive us mad. The wild levity of the thinker and the heavy sanity of the democracy were never more luridly displayed than in this scene among the skulls. Some days later the grave-diggers dug four other graves: a hard day's work. I suppose no one now could guess what they said.

HAMLET

PRINCE OF DENMARK

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

CLAUDIUS, King of Denmark.	MARCELLUS, }	Officers.
HAMLET, Son to the late, and	BERNARDO, }	
Nephew to the present King.	FRANCISCO, a Soldier.	
FORTINBRAS, Prince of Norway.	REYNALDO, Servant to Polonius.	
HORATIO, Friend to Hamlet.	A Captain.	
POLONIUS, Lord Chamberlain.	English Ambassadors.	
LAERTES, his Son.	Players. Two Clowns, Grave-	
VOLTIMAND,	diggers.	
CORNELIUS,		
ROSENCRANTZ,	GERTRUDE, Queen of Denmark	
GUILDENSTERN,	and Mother to Hamlet.	
OSRIC,		
	OPHELIA, Daughter to Polonius.	
A Gentleman,	Lords, Ladies, Officers, Soldiers,	
A Priest.	Sailors, Messengers, and	
	Attendants.	

Ghost of Hamlet's Father

SCENE.—*Elsinore.*

* ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Elsinore. A Platform before the Castle.*

FRANCISCO at his post. Enter to him BERNARDO.

Bernardo. Who's there ?

Francisco. Nay, answer me ; stand, and unfold yourself.

Bernardo. Long live the king !

Francisco. Bernardo ?

Bernardo. He.

Francisco. You come most carefully upon your hour.

Bernardo. 'Tis now struck twelve ; get thee to bed,

Francisco.

Francisco. For this relief much thanks ; 'tis bitter cold,
And I am sick at heart.

Bernardo. Have you had quiet guard ?

Francisco. Not a mouse stirring.

Bernardo. Well, good-night.

If you do meet Horatio and Marcellus,

11.

B

The rivals of my watch, bid them make haste.

Francisco. I think I hear them. Stand, ho ! Who's there ?

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Horatio. Friends to this ground.

Marcellus. And liegemen to the Dane. 15

Francisco. Give you good-night.

Marcellus. O ! farewell, honest soldier :

Who hath reliev'd you ?

Francisco. Bernardo has my place.

Give you good-night.

[*Exit.*

Marcellus. Holla ! Bernardo !

Bernardo. Say,

What ! is Horatio there ?

Horatio. A piece of him. 19

Bernardo. Welcome, Horatio ; welcome, good Marcellus

Marcellus. What ! has this thing appear'd again to-night ?

Bernardo. I have seen nothing.

Marcellus. Horatio says 'tis but our fantasy,

And will not let belief take hold of him

Touching this dreaded sight twice seen of us : 25

Therefore I have entreated him along

With us to watch the minutes of this night ;

That if again this apparition come,

He may approve our eyes and speak to it.

Horatio. Tush, tush ! 'twill not appear.

Bernardo. Sit down awhile, 30

And let us once again assail your ears,

That are so fortified against our story,

What we two nights have seen.

Horatio. Well, sit we down,

And let us hear Bernardo speak of this.

Bernardo. Last night of all, 35

When yond same star that's westward from the pole

Had made his course to illume that part of heaven

Where now it burns, Marcellus and myself,

The bell then beating one,—

Marcellus. Peace ! break thee off ; look, where it comes
again ! 40

Enter Ghost.

Bernardo. In the same figure, like the king that's dead.

Marcellus. Thou art a scholar ; speak to it, Horatio.

Bernardo. Looks it not like the king ? mark it, Horatio.

Horatio. Most like : it harrows me with fear and wonder.

Bernardo. It would be spoke to.

Marcellus. Question it, Horatio. 45

Horatio. What art thou that usurp'st this time of night,
Together with that fair and war-like form
In which the majesty of buried Denmark
Did sometimes march ! by heaven I charge thee, speak !

Marcellus. It is offended.

Bernardo. See ! it stalks away. 50

Horatio. Stay ! speak, speak ! I charge thee, speak !

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Marcellus. 'Tis gone, and will not answer.

Bernardo. How now, Horatio ! you tremble and look pale :
Is not this something more than fantasy ?
What think you on't ? 55

Horatio. Before my God, I might not this believe
Without the sensible and true avouch
Of mine own eyes.

Marcellus. Is it not like the king ?

Horatio. As thou art to thyself :
Such was the very armour he had on 60
When he the ambitious Norway combated ;
So frown'd he once, when, in an angry parle,
He smote the sledded Polacks on the ice.
'Tis strange.

Marcellus. Thus twice before, and jump at this dead hour,
With martial stalk hath he gone by our watch. 66

Horatio. In what particular thought to work I know not ;
But in the gross and scope of my opinion,
This bodes some strange eruption to our state.

Marcellus. Good now, sit down, and tell me, he that
knows, 70

Why this same strict and most observant watch
So nightly toils the subject of the land ;
And why such daily cast of brazen cannon,
And foreign mart for implements of war ;
Why such impress of shipwrights, whose sore task 75
Does not divide the Sunday from the week ;
What might be toward, that this sweaty haste
Doth make the night joint-labourer with the day :
Who is't that can inform me ?

Horatio. That can I ;
At least, the whisper goes so. Our last king, 80
Whose image even but now appear'd to us,
Was, as you know, by Fortinbras of Norway,

Thereto prick'd on by a most emulate pride,
 Dar'd to the combat ; in which our valiant Hamlet—
 For so this side of our known world esteem'd him— 85
 Did slay this Fortinbras ; who, by a seal'd compact,
 Well ratified by law and heraldry,
 Did forfeit with his life all those his lands
 Which he stood seiz'd of, to the conqueror ;
 Against the which, a moiety competent 90
 Was gaged by our king ; which had return'd
 To the inheritance of Fortinbras,
 Had he been vanquisher ; as, by the same covenant,
 And carriage of the article design'd,
 His fell to Hamlet. Now, sir, young Fortinbras, 95
 Of unimproved mettle hot and full,
 Hath in the skirts of Norway here and there
 Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute,
 For food and diet, to some enterprise
 That hath a stomach in't ; which is no other— 100
 As it doth well appear unto our state—
 But to recover of us, by strong hand
 And terms compulsative, those foresaid lands
 So by his father lost. And this, I take it,
 Is the main motive of our preparations, 105
 The source of this our watch and the chief head
 Of this post-haste and romage in the land.
Bernardo. I think it be no other but e'en so ;
 Well may it sort that this portentous figure
 Comes armed through our watch, so like the king 110
 That was and is the question of these wars.
Horatio. A mote it is to trouble the mind's eye.
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome,
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell,
 The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead 115
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets ;
 As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,
 Disasters in the sun ; and the moist star
 Upon whose influence Neptune's empire stands
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse : 120
 And even the like precursor of fierce events,
 As harbingers preceding still the fates
 And prologue to the omen coming on,
 Have heaven and earth together demonstrated
 Unto our climatures and countrymen. 125
 But, soft ! behold ! lo ! where it comes again.

Re-enter Ghost.

I'll cross it, though it blast me. Stay, illusion !
 If thou hast any sound, or use of voice,
 Speak to me :
 If there be any good thing to be done, 130
 That may to thee do ease and grace to me,
 Speak to me :

If thou art privy to thy country's fate,
 Which happily foreknowing may avoid,
 O ! speak : 135

Or if thou hast uphoarded in thy life
 Extorted treasure in the womb of earth,
 For which, they say, you spirits oft walk in death,
[*Cock crows.*]

Speak of it : stay, and speak ! Stop it, Marcellus.
Marcellus. Shall I strike at it with my partisan ? 140

Horatio. Do, if it will not stand.

Bernardo. 'Tis here !

Horatio. 'Tis here ! [*Exit Ghost.*]

Marcellus. 'Tis gone !

We do it wrong, being so majestical,
 To offer it the show of violence ;
 For it is, as the air, invulnerable, 145
 And our vain blows malicious mockery.

Bernardo. It was about to speak when the cock crew.

Horatio. And then it started like a guilty thing
 Upon a fearful summons. I have heard,
 The cock, that is the trumpet to the morn, 150
 Doth with his lofty and shrill-sounding throat
 Awake the god of day ; and at his warning,
 Whether in sea or fire, in earth or air,
 The extravagant and erring spirit hies
 To his confine ; and of the truth herein 155
 This present object made probation.

Marcellus. It faded on the crowing of the cock.
 Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes
 Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
 The bird of dawning singeth all night long ; 160
 And then, they say, no spirit can walk abroad ;
 The nights are wholesome ; then no planets strike,
 No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to charm,
 So hallow'd and so gracious is the time.

Horatio. So have I heard and do in part believe it. 165

But, look, the morn in russet mantle clad,
 Walks o'er the dew of yon high eastern hill;
 Break we our watch up; and by my advice
 Let us impart what we have seen to-night
 Unto young Hamlet; for, upon my life, 170
 This spirit, dumb to us, will speak to him.
 Do you consent we shall acquaint him with it,
 As needful in our loves, fitting our duty?

Marcellus. Let's do't, I pray; and I this morning know
 Where we shall find him most conveniently. 175

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room of State in the Castle.*

*Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS, LAERTES,
 VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS, Lords, and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
 The memory be green, and that it us befitted
 To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
 To be contracted in one brow of woe,
 Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature 5
 That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
 Together with remembrance of ourselves.
 Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
 The imperial jointress of this war-like state,
 Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy, 10
 With one auspicious and one dropping eye,
 With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
 In equal scale weighing delight and dole,
 Taken to wife: nor have we herein barr'd
 Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone 15
 With this affair along: for all, our thanks.
 Now follows, that you know, young Fortinbras,
 Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
 Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
 Our state to be disjoint and out of frame, 20
 Colleague'd with the dream of his advantage,
 He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
 Importing the surrender of those lands
 Lost by his father, with all bands of law,
 To our most valiant brother. So much for him. 25
 Now for ourself and for this time of meeting.
 Thus much the business is: we have here writ
 To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,

Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
 Of this his nephew's purpose, to suppress 30
 His further gait herein ; in that the levies,
 The lists and full proportions, are all made
 Out of his subject ; and we here dispatch
 You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway, 35
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king more than the scope
 Of these delated articles allow.
 Farewell and let your haste commend your duty.

Cornelius. In that and all things will we show our duty. 40
Voltimand.

King. We doubt it nothing : heartily farewell.
 [Exeunt VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?
 You told us of some suit ; what is't, Laertes ?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice ; what wouldst thou beg, Laertes, 45
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes ?

Laertes. Dread my lord, 50
 Your leave and favour to return to France ;
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
 To show my duty in your coronation,
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France 55
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.

King. Have you your father's leave ? What says Polonius ?
Polonius. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
 By laboursome petition, and at last
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent : 60
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will.
 But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Hamlet. [Aside.] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you ? 66

Hamlet. Not so, my lord ; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.

Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust :
 Thou know'st 'tis common ; all that live must die,
 Passing through nature to eternity. 70

Hamlet. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen.

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee ? 75

Hamlet. Seems, madam ! Nay, it is ; I know not ' seems.'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
 Nor customary suits of solemn black,
 Nor windy suspiration of forc'd breath,
 No, nor the fruitful river in the eye, 80
 Nor the dejected haviour of the visage,
 Together with all forms, modes, shows of grief,
 That can denote me truly ; these indeed seem,
 For they are actions that a man might play :
 But I have that within which passeth show ; 85
 These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,
 To give these mourning duties to your father :

But, you must know, your father lost a father ;
 That father lost, lost his ; and the survivor bound 90
 In filial obligation for some term

To do obsequious sorrow ; but to persevere
 In obstinate condolment is a course
 Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief :
 It shows a will most incorrect to heaven, 95
 A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,
 An understanding simple and unschool'd :

For what we know must be and is as common
 As any the most vulgar thing to sense,
 Why should we in our peevish opposition 100
 Take it to heart ? Fie ! 'tis a fault to heaven,
 A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,
 To reason most absurd, whose common theme
 Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,
 From the first corse till he that died to-day, 105

'This must be so.' We pray you, throw to earth
 This unprevailing woe, and think of us
 As of a father ; for let the world take note,
 You are the most immediate to our throne ;
 And with no less nobility of love 110
 Than that which dearest father bears his son
 Do I impart toward you. For your intent

In going back to school in Wittenberg,
 It is most retrograde to our desire ;
 And we beseech you, bend you to remain 115
 Here, in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
 Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet :
 I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

Hamlet. I shall in all my best obey you, madam. 120

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :

Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come ;
 This gentle and unforc'd accord of Hamlet
 Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,
 No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day, 125
 But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
 And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
 Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Exeunt all except HAMLET.*]

Hamlet. O ! that this too too solid flesh would melt,
 Thaw and resolve itself into a dew ; 130
 Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
 His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! O God !
 How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable
 Seem to me all the uses of this world.
 Fie on't ! O fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden, 135
 That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in nature
 Possess it merely. That it should come to this !
 But two months dead : nay, not so much, not two :
 So excellent a king ; that was, to this,
 Hyperion to a satyr ; so loving to my mother 140
 That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
 Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !
 Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him,
 As if increase of appetite had grown
 By what it fed on ; and yet, within a month,— 145
 Let me not think on't : Frailty, thy name is woman !
 A little month ; or ere those shoes were old
 With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
 Like Niobe, all tears ; why she, even she,—
 O God ! a beast, that wants discourse of reason, 150
 Would have mourn'd longer,—married with mine uncle,
 My father's brother, but no more like my father
 Than I to Hercules : within a month,
 Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes, 155

She married. O ! most wicked speed—
 It is not nor it cannot come to good ;
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue !

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

Horatio. Hail to your lordship !

Hamlet. I am glad to see you well : 160
 Horatio, or I do forget myself.

Horatio. The same, my lord, and your poor servant
 ever.

Hamlet. Sir, my good friend ; I'll change that name with
 you.

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio ?

Marcellus ? 165

Marcellus. My good lord,—

Hamlet. I am very glad to see you. [*To BERNARDO*]
 Good even, sir.

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

Horatio. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Hamlet. I would not hear your enemy say so, 170
 Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself ; I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart. 175

Horatio. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Hamlet. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;
 I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Horatio. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Hamlet. Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral bak'd meats
 Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables. 181

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Ere I had ever seen that day, Horatio !

My father, methinks I see my father.

Horatio. O ! where, my lord ?

Hamlet. In my mind's eye, Horatio. 185

Horatio. I saw him once ; he was a goodly king.

Hamlet. He was a man, take him for all in all,
 I shall not look upon his like again.

Horatio. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Hamlet. Saw who ? 190

Horatio. My lord, the king your father.

Hamlet. The king, my father !

Horatio. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,
Upon the witness of these gentlemen,
This marvel to you.

Hamlet. For God's love, let me hear. 195

Horatio. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd : a figure like your father,
Armed at points exactly, cap-a-pe, 200
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear, 205
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did,
And I with them the third night kept the watch ;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good, 210
The apparition comes. I knew your father ;
These hands are not more like.

Hamlet. But where was this ?

Marcellus. My lord, upon the platform where we
watch'd.

Hamlet. Did you not speak to it ?

Horatio. My lord, I did ;
But answer made it none : yet once methought 215
It lifted up its head and did address
Itself to motion, like as it would speak ;
But even then the morning cock crew loud,
And at the sound it shrunk in haste away
And vanish'd from our sight.

Hamlet. 'Tis very strange. 220

Horatio. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Hamlet. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night ?

Marcellus. We do, my lord. 225

Bernardo.

Hamlet. Arm'd, say you ?

Marcellus.

Bernardo.

Arm'd, my lord.

Hamlet.

From top to toe ?

Marcellus. } My lord, from head to foot.
Bernardo. }

Hamlet. Then saw you not his face ?

Horatio. O yes ! my lord ; he wore his beaver up.

Hamlet. What ! look'd he frowningly ? 230

Horatio. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Hamlet. Pale or red ?

Horatio. Nay, very pale.

Hamlet. And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

Horatio. Most constantly.

Hamlet. I would I had been there.

Horatio. It would have much amaz'd you. 235

Hamlet. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long ?

Horatio. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Marcellus. } Longer, longer.
Bernardo. }

Horatio. Not when I saw it.

Hamlet. His beard was grizzled, no ?

Horatio. It was, as I have seen it in his life, 240
 A sable silver'd.

Hamlet. I will watch to-night ;
 Perchance 'twill walk again.

Horatio. I warrant it will.

Hamlet. If it assume my noble father's person,
 I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
 And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all, 245
 If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
 Let it be tenable in your silence still ;
 And whatsoever else shall hap to-night,
 Give it an understanding, but no tongue :
 I will requite your loves. So, fare you well. 250
 Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
 I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Hamlet. Your loves, as mine to you. Farewell.

[*Exeunt* HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.]

My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well ;
 I doubt some foul play : would the night were come ! 255
 Till then sit still, my soul : foul deeds will rise,
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE III.—*A Room in POLONIUS' House.**Enter LAERTES and OPHELIA.*

Laertes. My necessities are embark'd ; farewell :
 And, sister, as the winds give benefit
 And convoy is assistant, do not sleep,
 But let me hear from you.

Ophelia. Do you doubt that ?

Laertes. For Hamlet, and the trifling of his favour, 5
 Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
 A violet in the youth of primy nature,
 Forward, not permanent, sweet, not lasting,
 The perfume and suppliance of a minute ;
 No more.

Ophelia. No more but so ?

Laertes. Think it no more 10
 For nature, crescent, does not grow alone
 In thews and bulk ; but, as this temple waxes,
 The inward service of the mind and soul
 Grows wide withal. Perhaps he loves you now,
 And now no soil nor cautel doth besmirch 15
 The virtue of his will ; but you must fear,
 His greatness weigh'd, his will is not his own,
 For he himself is subject to his birth ;
 He may not, as unvalu'd persons do,
 Carve for himself, for on his choice depends 20
 The safety and the health of the whole state ;
 And therefore must his choice be circumscrib'd
 Unto the voice and yielding of that body
 Whereof he is the head. Then if he says he loves you,
 It fits your wisdom so far to believe it 25
 As he in his particular act and place
 May give his saying deed ; which is no further
 Than the main voice of Denmark goes withal.
 Then weigh what loss your honour may sustain,
 If with too credent ear you list his songs, 30
 Or lose your heart, or your chaste treasure open
 To his unmaster'd importunity.
 Fear it, Ophelia, fear it, my dear sister ;
 And keep you in the rear of your affection,
 Out of the shot and danger of desire 35
 The chariest maid is prodigal enough
 If she unmask her beauty to the moon ;

Virtue herself 'scapes not calumnious strokes ;
 The canker galls the infants of the spring
 Too oft before their buttons be disclos'd, 40
 And in the morn and liquid dew of youth
 Contagious blastments are most imminent.
 Be wary then ; best safety lies in fear :
 Youth to itself rebels, though none else near.

Ophelia. I shall th' effect of this good lesson keep, 45
 As watchman to my heart. But, good my brother,
 Do not, as some ungracious pastors do,
 Show me the steep and thorny way to heaven,
 Whiles, like a puff'd and reckless libertine,
 Himself the primrose path of dalliance treads, 50
 And recks not his own rede.

Laertes. O ! fear me not.
 I stay too long ; but here my father comes.

Enter POLONIUS.

A double blessing is a double grace ;
 Occasion smiles upon a second leave.
Polonius. Yet here, Laertes ! aboard, aboard, for shame !
 The wind sits in the shoulder of your sail, 56
 And you are stay'd for. There, my blessing with thee !
 And these few precepts in thy memory
 Look thou character. Give thy thoughts no tongue,
 Nor any unproportion'd thought his act. 60
 Be thou familiar, but by no means vulgar ;
 The friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,
 Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel ;
 But do not dull thy palm with entertainment
 Of each new-hatch'd, unfledg'd comrade. Beware 65
 Of entrance to a quarrel, but, being in,
 Bear't that th' opposed may beware of thee.
 Give every man thine ear, but few thy voice ;
 Take each man's censure, but reserve thy judgment.
 Costly thy habit as thy purse can buy, 70
 But not express'd in fancy ; rich, not gaudy ;
 For the apparel oft proclaims the man,
 And they in France of the best rank and station
 Are most select and generous, chief in that.
 Neither a borrower, nor a lender be ; 75
 For loan oft loses both itself and friend,
 And borrowing dulls the edge of husbandry.
 This above all : to thine own self be true,

And it must follow, as the night the day,
 Thou canst not then be false to any man. 80
 Farewell ; my blessing season this in thee !

Laertes. Most humbly do I take my leave, my lord.

Polonius. The time invites you : go, your servants tend.

Laertes. Farewell, Ophelia ; and remember well

What I have said to you.

Ophelia. 'Tis in my memory lock'd, 85
 And you yourself shall keep the key of it.

Laertes. Farewell. [Exit.

Polonius. What is't, Ophelia, he hath said to you ?

Ophelia. So please you, something touching the Lord
 Hamlet.

Polonius. Marry, well bethought : 90
 'Tis told me, he hath very oft of late

Given private time to you ; and you yourself
 Have of your audience been most free and bounteous.

If it be so,—as so 'tis put on me,
 And that in way of caution,—I must tell you, 95

You do not understand yourself so clearly

As it behoves my daughter and your honour.

What is between you ? give me up the truth.

Ophelia. He hath, my lord, of late made many tenders
 Of his affection to me. 100

Polonius. Affection ! pooh ! you speak like a green girl,
 Unsifted in such perilous circumstance.

Do you believe his tenders, as you call them ?

Ophelia. I do not know, my lord, what I should think.

Polonius. Marry, I'll teach you : think yourself a baby,
 That you have ta'en these tenders for true pay, 106

Which are not sterling. Tender yourself more dearly ;

Or,—not to crack the wind of the poor phrase,

Running it thus,—you'll tender me a fool.

Ophelia. My lord, he hath importun'd me with love 110
 In honourable fashion.

Polonius. Ay, fashion you may call it : go to, go to.

Ophelia. And hath given countenance to his speech, my
 lord,

With almost all the holy vows of heaven.

Polonius. Ay, springes to catch woodcocks. I do know,
 When the blood burns, how prodigal the soul 116

Lends the tongue vows : these blazes, daughter,

Giving more light than heat, extinct in both,

Even in their promise, as it is a-making,

You must not take for fire. From this time 120
 Be somewhat scanter of your maiden presence ;
 Set your entreatments at a higher rate
 Than a command to parley. For Lord Hamlet,
 Believe so much in him, that he is young,
 And with a larger tether may he walk 125
 Than may be given you : in few, Ophelia,
 Do not believe his vows, for they are brokers,
 Not of that dye which their investments show,
 But mere implorators of unholy suits.
 This is for all : 130
 I would not, in plain terms, from this time forth,
 Have you so slander any moment's leisure,
 As to give words or talk with the Lord Hamlet.
 Look to't, I charge you ; come your ways. 134
Ophelia. I shall obey, my lord. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*The Platform.*

Enter HAMLET, HORATIO, and MARCELLUS.

Hamlet. The air bites shrewdly ; it is very cold.

Horatio. It is a nipping and an eager air.

Hamlet. What hour now ?

Horatio. I think it lacks of twelve.

Marcellus. No, it is struck.

Horatio. Indeed ? I heard it not : then it draws near the
season 5

Wherein the spirit held his wont to walk.

[*A flourish of trumpets, and ordnance shot off, within.*]

What does this mean, my lord ?

Hamlet. The king doth wake to-night and takes his rouse,
 Keeps wassail, and the swaggering up-spring reels ;
 And, as he drains his draughts of Rhenish down, 10
 The kettle-drum and trumpet thus bray out
 The triumph of his pledge.

Horatio. Is it a custom ?

Hamlet. Ay, marry, is't :
 But to my mind,—though I am native here
 And to the manner born,—it is a custom 15
 More honour'd in the breach than the observance.
 This heavy-headed revel east and west
 Makes us traduc'd and tax'd of other nations ;
 They clepe us drunkards, and with swinish phrase
 Soil our addition ; and indeed it takes 20

From our achievements, though perform'd at height,
 The pith and marrow of our attribute.
 So, oft it chanceth in particular men,
 That for some vicious mole of nature in them,
 (As, in their birth,—wherein they are not guilty, 25
 Since nature cannot choose his origin,—
 By the o'ergrowth of some complexion,
 Oft breaking down the pales and forts of reason,
 Or by some habit that too much o'er-leavens
 The form of plausible manners) that these men, 30
 Carrying, I say, the stamp of one defect,
 Being nature's livery, or fortune's star,
 Their virtues else, be they as pure as grace,
 As infinite as man may undergo,
 Shall in the general censure take corruption 35
 From that particular fault : the dram of eale
 Doth all the noble substance of a doubt,
 To his own scandal.

Enter Ghost.

Horatio. Look, my lord, it comes.

Hamlet. Angels and ministers of grace defend us !
 Be thou a spirit of health or goblin damn'd, 40
 Bring with thee airs from heaven or blasts from hell,
 Be thy intents wicked or charitable,
 Thou com'st in such a questionable shape
 That I will speak to thee : I'll call thee Hamlet,
 King, father ; royal Dane, O ! answer me : 45
 Let me not burst in ignorance ; but tell
 Why thy canoniz'd bones, hearsed in death,
 Have burst their cerements ; why the sepulchre,
 Wherein we saw thee quietly inurn'd,
 Hath op'd his ponderous and marble jaws, 50
 To cast thee up again. What may this mean,
 That thou, dead corse, again in complete steel
 Revisit'st thus the glimpses of the moon,
 Making night hideous, and we fools of nature
 So horridly to shake our disposition 55
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls ?
 Say, why is this ? wherefore ? what should we do ?

[The Ghost beckons HAMLET.]

Horatio. It beckons you to go away with it,
 As if it some impartment did desire
 To you alone.

Marcellus. Look, with what courteous action 60

It waves you to a more removed ground :
But do not go with it.

Horatio. No, by no means.

Hamlet. It will not speak ; then, will I follow it.

Horatio. Do not, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, what should be the fear ?
I do not set my life at a pin's fee ; 65

And for my soul, what can it do to that,
Being a thing immortal as itself ?

It waves me forth again ; I'll follow it.

Horatio. What if it tempt you toward the flood, my
lord,

Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff 70

That beetles o'er his base into the sea,
And there assume some other horrible form,
Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason
And draw you into madness ? think of it ;

The very place puts toys of desperation, 75

Without more motive, into every brain
That looks so many fathoms to the sea
And hears it roar beneath.

Hamlet. It waves me still. Go on, I'll follow thee.

Marcellus. You shall not go, my lord.

Hamlet. Hold off your hands ! 80

Horatio. Be rul'd ; you shall not go.

Hamlet. My fate cries out,
And makes each petty artery in this body
As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve. [Ghost beckons.
Still am I call'd. Unhand me, gentlemen,

[*Breaking from them.*

By heaven ! I'll make a ghost of him that lets me : 85

I say, away ! Go on, I'll follow thee.

[*Exeunt Ghost and HAMLET.*

Horatio. He waxes desperate with imagination.

Marcellus. Let's follow ; 'tis not fit thus to obey him.

Horatio. Have after. To what issue will this come ?

Marcellus. Something is rotten in the state of Den-
mark. 90

Horatio. Heaven will direct it.

Marcellus. Nay, let's follow him.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*Another Part of the Platform.**Enter Ghost and HAMLET.*

Hamlet. Whither wilt thou lead me ? speak ; I'll go no further.

Ghost. Mark me.

Hamlet. I will.

Ghost. My hour is almost come,
When I to sulphurous and tormenting flames
Must render up myself.

Hamlet. Alas ! poor ghost.

Ghost. Pity me not, but lend thy serious hearing 5
To what I shall unfold.

Hamlet. Speak ; I am bound to hear.

Ghost. So art thou to revenge, when thou shalt hear.

Hamlet. What ?

Ghost. I am thy father's spirit ;
Doom'd for a certain term to walk the night, 10
And for the day confin'd to fast in fires,
Till the foul crimes done in my days of nature
Are burnt and purg'd away. But that I am forbid
To tell the secrets of my prison-house,
I could a tale unfold whose lightest word 15
Would harrow up thy soul, freeze thy young blood,
Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres,
Thy knotted and combined locks to part,
And each particular hair to stand an end,
Like quills upon the fretful porpentine : 20
But this eternal blazon must not be
To ears of flesh and blood. List, list, O list !
If thou didst ever thy dear father love—

Hamlet. O God !

Ghost. Revenge his foul and most unnatural murder. 25

Hamlet. Murder !

Ghost. Murder most foul, as in the best it is ;
But this most foul, strange, and unnatural.

Hamlet. Haste me to know't, that I, with wings as swift
As meditation or the thoughts of love, 30
May sweep to my revenge.

Ghost. I find thee apt ;
And duller shouldst thou be than the fat weed
That rots itself in ease on Lethe wharf,
Wouldst thou not stir in this. Now, Hamlet, hear :

'Tis given out that, sleeping in mine orchard,
A serpent stung me ; so the whole ear of Denmark
Is by a forged process of my death
Rankly abus'd ; but know, thou noble youth,
The serpent that did sting thy father's life
Now wears his crown.

Hamlet. O my prophetic soul !
My uncle !

Ghost. Ay, that licentious, that adulterate beast,
With witchcraft of his wit, with traitorous gifts,—
O wicked wit and gifts, that have the power
So to seduce !—won to his shameful lust
The will of my most seeming-virtuous queen.
O Hamlet ! what a falling-off was there ;
From me, whose love was of that dignity
That it went hand in hand even with the vow
I made to her in marriage ; and to decline
Upon a wretch whose natural gifts were poor
To those of mine !

But virtue, as it never will be mov'd,
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.

But, soft ! methinks I scent the morning air ;
Brief let me be. Sleeping within mine orchard,
My custom always in the afternoon,
Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
And in the porches of mine ears did pour
The leperous distilment ; whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigour it doth posset
And curd, like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood : so did it mine
And a most instant tetter bark'd about,
Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust,
All my smooth body.

Thus was I, sleeping, by a brother's hand,
Of life, of crown, of queen, at once dispatch'd ;
Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin,
Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanel'd,

No reckoning made, but sent to my account
 With all my imperfections on my head :
 O, horrible ! O, horrible ! most horrible ! 80
 If thou hast nature in thee, bear it not ;
 But, howsoever thou pursu'st this act,
 Taint not thy mind, nor let thy soul contrive 85
 Against thy mother aught ; leave her to heaven,
 And to those thorns that in her bosom lodge,
 To prick and sting her. Fare thee well at once !
 The glow-worm shows the matin to be near,
 And 'gins to pale his uneffectual fire ; 90
 Adieu, adieu ! Hamlet, remember me. [Exit.

Hamlet. O all you host of heaven ! O earth ! What
 else ?

And shall I couple hell ? O fie ! Hold, hold, my heart !
 And you, my sinews, grow not instant old,
 But bear me stiffly up ! Remember thee ! 95
 Ay, thou poor ghost, while memory holds a seat
 In this distracted globe. Remember thee !
 Yea, from the table of my memory
 I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past, 100
 That youth and observation copied there ;
 And thy commandment all alone shall live
 Within the book and volume of my brain,
 Unmix'd with baser matter : yes, by heaven !
 O most pernicious woman ! 105
 O villain, villain, smiling, damned villain !
 My tables,—meet it is I set it down,
 That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain ;
 At least I'm sure it may be so in Denmark : [Writing.
 So, uncle, there you are. Now to my word ; 110
 It is, 'Adieu, adieu ! remember me.'
 I have sworn't.

Horatio. [Within.] My lord ! my lord !

Marcellus. [Within.] Lord Hamlet !

Horatio. [Within.] Heaven secure him !

Marcellus. [Within.] So be it !

Horatio. [Within.] Hillo, ho, ho, my lord ! 115

Hamlet. Hillo, ho, ho, boy ! come, bird, come.

Enter HORATIO and MARCELLUS.

Marcellus. How is't, my noble lord ?

Horatio. What news, my lord ?

Hamlet. O ! wonderful.

Horatio. Good my lord, tell it.

Hamlet. No ; you will reveal it.

Horatio. Not I, my lord, by heaven !

Marcellus. Nor I, my lord. 120

Hamlet. How say you, then ; would heart of man once think it ?

But you'll be secret ?

Horatio. }
Marcellus. } Ay, by heaven, my lord.

Hamlet. There's ne'er a villain dwelling in all Denmark,
 But he's an arrant knave.

Horatio. There needs no ghost, my lord, come from the
 grave, 125
 To tell us this.

Hamlet. Why, right ; you are i' the right ;
 And so, without more circumstance at all,
 I hold it fit that we shake hands and part ;
 You, as your business and desire shall point you,—
 For every man hath business and desire, 130
 Such as it is,—and, for mine own poor part,
 Look you, I'll go pray.

Horatio. These are but wild and whirling words, my
 lord.

Hamlet. I am sorry they offend you, heartily ;
 Yes, faith, heartily.

Horatio. There's no offence, my lord. 135

Hamlet. Yes, by Saint Patrick, but there is, Horatio,
 And much offence, too. Touching this vision here,
 It is an honest ghost, that let me tell you ;
 For your desire to know what is between us,
 O'ermaster't as you may. And now, good friends, 140
 As you are friends, scholars, and soldiers,
 Give me one poor request.

Horatio. What is't, my lord ? we will.

Hamlet. Never make known what you have seen to-
 night.

Horatio. }
Marcellus. } My lord, we will not.

Hamlet. Nay, but swear't.

Horatio. In faith, 145
 My lord, not I.

Marcellus. Nor I, my lord, in faith.

Hamlet. Upon my sword.

Marcellus.

We have sworn, my lord, already.

Hamlet. Indeed, upon my sword, indeed.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hamlet. Ah, ha, boy! sayst thou so? art thou there,
true-penny? 150

Come on,—you hear this fellow in the cellarage,—

Consent to swear.

Horatio. Propose the oath, my lord.

Hamlet. Never to speak of this that you have seen,
Swear by my sword.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear. 155

Hamlet. *Hic et ubique?* then we'll shift our ground.
Come hither, gentlemen,

And lay your hands again upon my sword:

Never to speak of this that you have heard,

Swear by my sword. 160

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

Hamlet. Well said, old mole! canst work i' the earth so
fast?

A worthy pioner! once more remove, good friends.

Horatio. O day and night, but this is wondrous strange!

Hamlet. And therefore as a stranger give it welcome. 165
There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

But come;

Here, as before, never, so help you mercy,

How strange or odd soe'er I bear myself, 170

As I perchance hereafter shall think meet

To put an antic disposition on,

That you, at such times seeing me, never shall,

With arms encumber'd thus, or this head-shake,

Or by pronouncing of some doubtful phrase, 175

As, 'Well, well, we know,' or, 'We could, an if we would;'

Or, 'If we list to speak,' or, 'There be, an if they might;'

Or such ambiguous giving out, to note

That you know ought of me: this not to do,

So grace and mercy at your most need help you, 180
Swear.

Ghost. [*Beneath.*] Swear.

[*They swear.*]

Hamlet. Rest, rest, perturbed spirit! So, gentlemen,
With all my love I do commend me to you:

And what so poor a man as Hamlet is

May do, to express his love and friending to you, 185

God willing, shall not lack. Let us go in together;

And still your fingers on your lips, I pray.
 The time is out of joint : O cursed spite,
 That ever I was born to set it right !
 Nay, come, let's go together.

190

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Room in POLONIUS' House.**Enter POLONIUS and REYNALDO.*

Polonius. Give him this money and these notes, Reynaldo.

Reynaldo. I will, my lord.

Polonius. You shall do marvellous wisely, good Reynaldo,
 Before you visit him, to make inquiry
 Of his behaviour.

Reynaldo. My lord, I did intend it. 5

Polonius. Marry, well said, very well said. Look you, sir,
 Inquire me first what Danskers are in Paris ;
 And how, and who, what means, and where they keep,
 What company, at what expense ; and finding
 By this encompassment and drift of question 10
 That they do know my son, come you more nearer
 Than your particular demands will touch it :
 Take you, as 'twere, some distant knowledge of him ;
 As thus, ' I know his father, and his friends,
 And, in part, him ; ' do you mark this, Reynaldo ? 15

Reynaldo. Ay, very well, my lord.

Polonius. ' And, in part, him ; but, ' you may say, ' not
 well :

But if't be he I mean, he's very wild,
 Addicted so and so ; ' and there put on him
 What forgeries you please ; marry, none so rank 20
 As may dishonour him ; take heed of that ;
 But, sir, such wanton, wild, and usual slips
 As are companions noted and most known
 To youth and liberty.

Reynaldo. As gaming, my lord ?

Polonius. Ay, or drinking, fencing, swearing, quarrelling ;
 You may go so far. 26

Reynaldo. My lord, that would dishonour him.

Polonius. Faith, no ; as you may season it in the charge.
 You must not put another scandal on him,
 That he is open to incontinency ; 30

That's not my meaning ; but breathe his faults so quaintly
That they may seem the taints of liberty,
The flash and outbreak of a fiery mind,
A savageness in unreclaimed blood,
Of general assault.

Reynaldo. But, my good lord,— 35

Polonius. Wherefore should you do this ?

Reynaldo. Ay, my lord,
I would know that.

Polonius. Marry, sir, here's my drift ;
And, I believe, it is a fetch of warrant :
You laying these slight sullies on my son,
As 'twere a thing a little soil'd i' the working, 40
Mark you,

Your party in converse, him you would sound,
Having ever seen in the prenominate crimes
The youth you breathe of guilty, be assur'd,
He closes with you in this consequence ; 45
' Good sir,' or so ; or ' friend,' or ' gentleman,'
According to the phrase or the addition
Of man and country.

Reynaldo. Very good, my lord.

Polonius. And then, sir, does he this,—he does,— what
was I about to say ? By the mass I was about to say 50
something : where did I leave ?

Reynaldo. At ' closes in the consequence.'
At ' friend or so,' and ' gentleman.'

Polonius. At ' closes in the consequence,' ay, marry ;
He closes with you thus : ' I know the gentleman ; 55
I saw him yesterday, or t'other day,

Or then, or then ; with such, or such ; and, as you say,
There was a' gaming ; there o'ertook in's rouse ;
There falling out at tennis.' See you now ; 59

Your bait of falsehood takes this carp of truth ;
And thus do we of wisdom and of reach,
With windlasses, and with assays of bias, 65

By indirections find directions out :
So by my former lecture and advice
Shall you my son. You have me, have you not ?

Reynaldo. My lord, I have.

Polonius. God be wi' you ; fare you well.

Reynaldo. Good my lord ! 70

Polonius. Observe his inclination in yourself.

Reynaldo. I shall, my lord.

Polonius. And let him ply his music.

Reynaldo.

Well, my lord.

Polonius. Farewell !

[*Exit REYNALDO.*]

Enter OPHELIA.

How now, Ophelia ! what's the matter ?

Ophelia. Alas ! my lord, I have been so affrighted. 75

Polonius. With what, in the name of God ?

Ophelia. My lord, as I was sewing in my closet,

Lord Hamlet, with his doublet all unbrac'd ;

No hat upon his head ; his stockings foul'd,

Ungarter'd, and down-gyved to his ancle ; 80

Pale as his shirt ; his knees knocking each other ;

And with a look so piteous in purport

As if he had been loosed out of hell

To speak of horrors, he comes before me.

Polonius. Mad for thy love ?

Ophelia. My lord, I do not know ; 85

But truly I do fear it.

Polonius. What said he ?

Ophelia. He took me by the wrist and held me hard,

Then goes he to the length of all his arm,

And, with his other hand thus o'er his brow,

He falls to such perusal of my face 90

As he would draw it. Long stay'd he so ;

At last, a little shaking of mine arm,

And thrice his head thus waving up and down,

He rais'd a sigh so piteous and profound

That it did seem to shatter all his bulk 95

And end his being. That done, he lets me go,

And, with his head over his shoulder turn'd,

He seem'd to find his way without his eyes ;

For out o' doors he went without their help,

And to the last bended their light on me. 100

Polonius. Come, go with me ; I will go seek the king.

This is the very ecstasy of love,

Whose violent property fordoes itself

And leads the will to desperate undertakings

As oft as any passion under heaven 105

That does afflict our natures. I am sorry.

What ! have you given him any hard words of late ?

Ophelia. No, my good lord ; but, as you did command,
I did repel his letters and denied

His access to me.

Polonius. That hath made him mad. 110
 I am sorry that with better heed and judgment
 I had not quoted him ; I fear'd he did but trifle,
 And meant to wrack thee ; but, beshrew my jealousy !
 By heaven, it is as proper to our age
 To cast beyond ourselves in our opinions 115
 As it is common for the younger sort
 To lack discretion. Come, go we to the king :
 This must be known ; which, being kept close, might move
 More grief to hide than hate to utter love.
 Come. [Exeunt.

SCENE II.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Attendants.

King. Welcome, dear Rosencrantz and Guildenstern !
 Moreover that we much did long to see you,
 The need we have to use you did provoke
 Our hasty sending. Something have you heard
 Of Hamlet's transformation ; so I call it, 5
 Since nor the exterior nor the inward man
 Resembles that it was. What it should be,
 More than his father's death, that thus hath put him
 So much from the understanding of himself,
 I cannot dream of : I entreat you both, 10
 That, being of so young days brought up with him,
 And since so neighbour'd to his youth and humour,
 That you vouchsafe your rest here in our court
 Some little time ; so by your companies
 To draw him on to pleasures, and to gather, 15
 So much as from occasion you may glean,
 Whe'r aught to us unknown afflicts him thus,
 That, open'd, lies within our remedy.

Queen. Good gentlemen, he hath much talk'd of you ;
 And sure I am two men there are not living 20
 To whom he more adheres. If it will please you
 To show us so much gentry and good will
 As to expend your time with us awhile,
 For the supply and profit of our hope,
 Your visitation shall receive such thanks 25
 As fits a king's remembrance.

Rosencrantz. Both your majesties
 Might, by the sovereign power you have of us,

Put your dread pleasures more into command
Than to entreaty.

Guildestern. But we both obey,
And here give up ourselves, in the full bent, 30
To lay our service freely at your feet,
To be commanded.

King. Thanks, Rosencrantz and gentle Guildestern.

Queen. Thanks, Guildestern and gentle Rosencrantz ;
And I beseech you instantly to visit 35
My too much changed son. Go, some of you,
And bring these gentlemen where Hamlet is.

Guildestern. Heavens make our presence, and our practices
Pleasant and helpful to him !

Queen. Ay, amen !

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and some Attendants.]

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. The ambassadors from Norway, my good lord,
Are joyfully return'd. 41

King. Thou still hast been the father of good news.

Polonius. Have I, my lord ? Assure you, my good liege,
I hold my duty, as I hold my soul,
Both to my God and to my gracious king ; 45
And I do think—or else this brain of mine
Hunts not the trail of policy so sure
As it hath us'd to do—that I have found
The very cause of Hamlet's lunacy.

King. O ! speak of that ; that do I long to hear. 50

Polonius. Give first admittance to the ambassadors ;
My news shall be the fruit to that great feast.

King. Thyself do grace to them, and bring them in.

[*Exit* POLONIUS.]

He tells me, my sweet queen, that he hath found
The head and source of all your son's distemper. 55

Queen. I doubt it is no other but the main ;
His father's death, and our o'erhasty marriage.

King. Well, we shall sift him.

Re-enter POLONIUS, with VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.

Welcome, my good friends !
Say, Voltimand, what from our brother Norway ?

Voltimand. Most fair return of greetings, and desires. 60

Upon our first, he sent out to suppress
 His nephew's levies, which to him appear'd
 To be a preparation 'gainst the Polack;
 But, better look'd into, he truly found
 It was against your highness: whereat griev'd,
 65 That so his sickness, age, and impotence
 Was falsely borne in hand, sends out arrests
 On Fortinbras; which he, in brief, obeys,
 Receives rebuke from Norway, and, in fine,
 Makes vow before his uncle never more
 70 To give the assay of arms against your majesty.
 Whereon old Norway, overcome with joy,
 Gives him three thousand crowns in annual fee,
 And his commission to employ those soldiers,
 So levied as before, against the Polack;
 75 With an entreaty, herein further shown, [*Giving a paper.*
 That it might please you to give quiet pass
 Through your dominions for this enterprise,
 On such regards of safety and allowance
 As therein are set down.

King. It likes us well;
 And at our more consider'd time we'll read,
 Answer, and think upon this business:
 Meantime we thank you for your well-took labour.
 Go to your rest; at night we'll feast together:
 Most welcome home.

[*Exeunt* VOLTIMAND and CORNELIUS.]

Polonius. This business is well ended. 85
 My liege, and madam, to expostulate
 What majesty should be, what duty is,
 Why day is day, night night, and time is time,
 Were nothing but to waste night, day, and time.
 Therefore, since brevity is the soul of wit,
 90 And tediousness the limbs and outward flourishes,
 I will be brief. Your noble son is mad:
 Mad call I it; for, to define true madness,
 What is't but to be nothing else but mad?
 But let that go.

Queen. More matter, with less art. 95

Polonius. Madam, I swear I use no art at all.
 That he is mad, 'tis true; 'tis true 'tis pity;
 And pity 'tis 'tis true: a foolish figure;
 But farewell it, for I will use no art.
 Mad let us grant him, then; and now remains 100

That we find out the cause of this effect,
 Or rather say, the cause of this defect,
 For this effect defective comes by cause ;
 Thus it remains, and the remainder thus.
 Perpend.

105

I have a daughter, have while she is mine ;
 Who, in her duty and obedience, mark,
 Hath given me this : now, gather, and surmise.
To the celestial, and my soul's idol, the most beautified Ophelia.—
 That's an ill phrase, a vile phrase ; ' beautified ' is a vile
 phrase ; but you shall hear. Thus :
In her excellent white bosom, these, &c.—

Queen. Came this from Hamlet to her ?

Polonius. Good madam, stay awhile ; I will be faithful.

Doubt thou the stars are fire ; 115

Doubt that the sun doth move ;

Doubt truth to be a liar ;

But never doubt I love.

*O dear Ophelia ! I am ill at these numbers : I have not
 art to reckon my groans ; but that I love thee best, O most* 120
best ! believe it. Adieu.

*Thine evermore, most dear lady, whilst this machine
 is to him,*

HAMLET.

This in obedience hath my daughter shown me ; 125
 And more above, hath his solicitings,
 As they fell out by time, by means, and place,
 All given to mine ear.

King. But how hath she
 Receiv'd his love ?

Polonius. What do you think of me ?

King. As of a man faithful and honourable. 130

Polonius. I would fain prove so. But what might you
 think,

When I had seen this hot love on the wing,—
 As I perceiv'd it, I must tell you that,
 Before my daughter told me,—what might you,
 Or my dear majesty, your queen here, think, 135
 If I had play'd the desk or table-book,
 Or given my heart a winking, mute and dumb,
 Or look'd upon this love with idle sight ;
 What might you think ? No, I went round to work,
 And my young mistress thus I did bespeak : 140
 ' Lord Hamlet is a prince, out of thy star ;

This must not be : ' and then I precepts gave her,
 That she should lock herself from his resort,
 Admit no messengers, receive no tokens.
 Which done, she took the fruits of my advice ; 145
 And he, repulsed,—a short tale to make,—
 Fell into a sadness, then into a fast,
 Thence to a watch, thence into a weakness,
 Thence to a lightness ; and by this declension
 Into the madness wherein now he raves, 150
 And all we wail for.

King. Do you think 'tis this ?

Queen. It may be, very likely.

Polonius. Hath there been such a time,—I'd fain know
 that,—

That I have positively said, ' 'Tis so,'
 When it prov'd otherwise ?

King. Not that I know. 155

Polonius. Take this from this, if this be otherwise :
 [*Pointing to his head and shoulder.*]

If circumstances lead me, I will find
 Where truth is hid, though it were hid indeed
 Within the centre.

King. How may we try it further ?

Polonius. You know sometimes he walks four hours
 together 160

Here in the lobby.

Queen. So he does indeed.

Polonius. At such a time I'll loose my daughter to him ;
 Be you and I behind an arras then ;
 Mark the encounter ; if he love her not,
 And be not from his reason fallen thereon, 165
 Let me be no assistant for a state,
 But keep a farm, and carters.

King. We will try it.

Queen. But look, where sadly the poor wretch comes
 reading.

Polonius. Away ! I do beseech you, both away.
 I'll board him presently.

[*Exeunt KING, QUEEN, and Attendants.*]

Enter HAMLET, reading.

O ! give me leave. 170
 How does my good Lord Hamlet ?

Hamlet. Well, God a-mercy.

Polonius. Do you know me, my lord ?

Hamlet. Excellent well ; you are a fishmonger.

Polonius. Not I, my lord. 175

Hamlet. Then I would you were so honest a man.

Polonius. Honest, my lord !

Hamlet. Ay, sir ; to be honest, as this world goes, is to be one man picked out of ten thousand. 180

Polonius. That's very true, my lord.

Hamlet. For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion,—Have you a daughter ? 185

Polonius. I have, my lord.

Hamlet. Let her not walk i' the sun : conception is a blessing ; but not as your daughter may conceive. Friend, look to't.

Polonius. [*Aside.*] How say you by that ? Still harping on my daughter : yet he knew me not at first ; he said I was a fishmonger : he is far gone, far gone : and truly in my youth I suffered much extremity for love ; very near this. I'll speak to him again. What do you read, my lord ? 190

Hamlet. Words, words, words.

Polonius. What is the matter, my lord ?

Hamlet. Between who ?

Polonius. I mean the matter that you read, my lord. 200

Hamlet. Slanders, sir : for the satirical rogue says here that old men have grey beards, that their faces are wrinkled, their eyes purging thick amber and plum-tree gum, and that they have a plentiful lack of wit, together with most weak hams : all which, sir, though I most powerfully and potently believe, yet I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down ; for you yourself, sir, should be old as I am, if, like a crab, you could go backward. 205

Polonius. [*Aside.*] Though this be madness, yet there is method in't. Will you walk out of the air, my lord ?

Hamlet. Into my grave ?

Polonius. Indeed, that is out o' the air. [*Aside.*] How pregnant sometimes his replies are ! a happiness that often madness hits on, which reason and sanity could not so prosperously be delivered of. I will leave him, and suddenly contrive the means of meeting between him and my daughter. My honourable lord, I will most humbly take my leave of you. 210

Hamlet. You cannot, sir, take from me any thing that

I will more willingly part withal ; except my life, except
my life, except my life. 225

Polonius. Fare you well, my lord. [Going.

Hamlet. These tedious old fools !

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Polonius. You go to seek the Lord Hamlet ; there
he is.

Rosencrantz. [To POLONIUS.] God save you, sir !

[Exit POLONIUS.

Guildenstern. Mine honoured lord ! 230

Rosencrantz. My most dear lord !

Hamlet. My excellent good friends ! How dost thou,
Guildenstern ! Ah, Rosencrantz ! Good lads, how do ye
both ?

Rosencrantz. As the indifferent children of the earth. 235

Guildenstern. Happy in that we are not over happy ;
On Fortune's cap we are not the very button.

Hamlet. Nor the soles of her shoe ?

Rosencrantz. Neither, my lord

Hamlet. What news ?

Rosencrantz. None, my lord, but that the world's 245
grown honest.

Hamlet. Then is doomsday near ; but your news is
not true. Let me question more in particular : what
have you, my good friends, deserved at the hands of
Fortune, that she sends you to prison hither ? 250

Guildenstern. Prison, my lord !

Hamlet. Denmark's a prison.

Rosencrantz. Then is the world one.

Hamlet. A goodly one ; in which there are many con- 255
fines, wards, and dungeons, Denmark being one o' the
worst.

Rosencrantz. We think not so, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, then, 'tis none to you ; for there is
nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so : to 260
me it is a prison.

Rosencrantz. Why, then your ambition makes it one ;
'tis too narrow for your mind.

Hamlet. O God ! I could be bounded in a nutshell,
and count myself a king of infinite space, were it not that 265
I have bad dreams.

Guildenstern. Which dreams, indeed, are ambition,

for the very substance of the ambitious is merely the shadow of a dream.

Hamlet. A dream itself is but a shadow. 270

Rosencrantz. Truly, and I hold ambition of so airy and light a quality that it is but a shadow's shadow.

Hamlet. Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows. 275
Shall we to the court ? for, by my fay, I cannot reason.

Rosencrantz. } We'll wait upon you.
Guildestern. }

Hamlet. No such matter ; I will not sort you with the 280
rest of my servants, for, to speak to you like an honest man, I am most dreadfully attended. But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore ?

Rosencrantz. To visit you, my lord ; no other occasion. 285

Hamlet. Beggar that I am, I am even poor in thanks ; but I thank you : and sure, dear friends, my thanks are too dear a halfpenny. Were you not sent for ? Is it your own inclining ? Is it a free visitation ? Come, come, deal 290
justly with me : come, come ; nay, speak.

Guildestern. What should we say, my lord ?

Hamlet. Why anything, but to the purpose. You were sent for ; and there is a kind of confession in your looks 295
which your modesties have not craft enough to colour : I know the good king and queen have sent for you.

Rosencrantz. To what end, my lord ?

Hamlet. That you must teach me. But let me conjure 300
you, by the rights of our fellowship, by the consonancy of our youth, by the obligation of our ever-preserved love, and by what more dear a better proposer could charge you withal, be even and direct with me, whether you were sent 305
for or no !

Rosencrantz. [*Aside to GUILDENSTERN.*] What say you ?

Hamlet. [*Aside.*] Nay, then, I have an eye of you. If you love me, hold not off.

Guildestern. My lord, we were sent for. 310

Hamlet. I will tell you why ; so shall my anticipation prevent your discovery, and your secrecy to the king and queen moult no feather. I have of late,—but wherefore I know not,—lost all my mirth, forgone all custom of 315
exercises ; and indeed it goes so heavily with my disposition that this goodly frame, the earth, seems to me a sterile promontory ; this most excellent canopy, the air, look you, this brave o'erhanging firmament, this majestical 320

roof fretted with golden fire, why, it appears no other thing to me but a foul and pestilent congregation of vapours. What a piece of work is a man ! How noble in reason ! how infinite in faculty ! in form, in moving, how express and admirable ! in action how like an angel ! in apprehension how like a god ! the beauty of the world ! the paragon of animals ! And yet, to me, what is this quintessence of dust ? man delights not me ; no, nor woman neither, though, by your smiling, you seem to say so. 325 330

Rosencrantz. My lord, there was no such stuff in my thoughts.

Hamlet. Why did you laugh then, when I said, ' man delights not me ? ' 335

Rosencrantz. To think, my lord, if you delight not in man, what lenten entertainment the players shall receive from you : we coted them on the way ; and hither are they coming, to offer you service. 340

Hamlet. He that plays the king shall be welcome ; his majesty shall have tribute of me ; the adventurous knight shall use his foil and target ; the lover shall not sigh gratis ; the humorous man shall end his part in peace ; the clown shall make those laugh whose lungs are tickle o' the sere ; and the lady shall say her mind freely, or the blank verse shall halt for't. What players are they ? 345

Rosencrantz. Even those you were wont to take delight in, the tragedians of the city. 350

Hamlet. How chances it they travel ? their residence, both in reputation and profit, was better both ways.

Rosencrantz. I think their inhibition comes by the means of the late innovation. 355

Hamlet. Do they hold the same estimation they did when I was in the city ? Are they so followed ?

Rosencrantz. No, indeed they are not.

Hamlet. How comes it ? Do they grow rusty ? 360

Rosencrantz. Nay, their endeavour keeps in the wonted pace : but there is, sir, an aery of children, little eyases, that cry out on the top of question, and are most tyrannically clapped for't : these are now the fashion, and so berattle the common stages,—so they call them,—that many wearing rapiers are afraid of goose-quills, and dare scarce come thither. 365

Hamlet. What ! are they children ? who maintains 'em ? how are they escoted ? Will they pursue the quality 370

no longer than they can sing? will they not say afterwards, if they should grow themselves to common players,—as it is most like, if their means are no better,—their writers do them wrong, to make them exclaim against their own succession? 375

Rosencrantz. Faith, there has been much to-do on both sides : and the nation holds it no sin to tarre them to controversy : there was, for a while, no money bid for argument, unless the poet and the player went to cuffs in the question. 380

Hamlet. Is it possible?

Guildestern. O ! there has been much throwing about of brains.

Hamlet. Do the boys carry it away? 385

Rosencrantz. Ay, that they do, my lord ; Hercules and his load too.

Hamlet. It is not very strange ; for my uncle is King of Denmark, and those that would make mows at him while my father lived, give twenty, forty, fifty, a hundred ducats a-piece for his picture in little. 'Sblood, there is something in this more than natural, if philosophy could find it out. 390

[*Flourish of trumpets within.*]

Guildestern. There are the players. 395

Hamlet. Gentlemen, you are welcome to Elsinore. Your hands, come then ; the appurtenance of welcome is fashion and ceremony : let me comply with you in this garb, lest my extent to the players—which, I tell you, must show fairly outward—should more appear like entertainment than yours. You are welcome ; but my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived. 400

Guildestern. In what, my dear lord?

Hamlet. I am but mad north-north-west : when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw. 405

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. Well be with you, gentlemen !

Hamlet. Hark you, Guildestern ; and you too ; at each ear a hearer : that great baby you see there is not yet out of his swaddling-clouts. 410

Rosencrantz. Happily he's the second time come to them ; for they say an old man is twice a child.

Hamlet. I will prophesy he comes to tell me of the players ; mark it. You say right, sir ; o' Monday morning ; 'twas so indeed. 415

Polonius. My lord, I have news to tell you.

Hamlet. My lord, I have news to tell you. When Roscius was an actor in Rome,—

Polonius. The actors are come hither, my lord. 420

Hamlet. Buzz, buzz !

Polonius. Upon my honour,—

Hamlet. Then came each actor on his ass,—

Polonius. The best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, 425
historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-
historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited :
Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light. For
the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men. 430

Hamlet. O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou !

Polonius. What a treasure had he, my lord ?

Hamlet. Why

One fair daughter and no more, 435
The which he loved passing well.

Polonius. [*Aside.*] Still on my daughter.

Hamlet. Am I not i' the right, old Jephthah ?

Polonius. If you call me Jephthah, my lord, I have 440
a daughter that I love passing well.

Hamlet. Nay, that follows not.

Polonius. What follows, then, my lord ?

Hamlet. Why,

As by lot, God wot.

And then, you know, 445

It came to pass, as most like it was.—

The first row of the pious chanson will show you more ;
for look where my abridgment comes.

Enter four or five Players.

You are welcome, masters ; welcome, all. I am glad to 450
see thee well : welcome, good friends. O, my old friend !
Thy face is valanced since I saw thee last : comest thou to
beard me in Denmark ? What ! my young lady and
mistress ! By'r lady, your ladyship is nearer heaven than
when I saw you last, by the altitude of a chopine. Pray 455
God, your voice, like a piece of uncurrent gold, be not
cracked within the ring. Masters, you are all welcome.
We'll e'en to't like French falconers, fly at anything we see :
we'll have a speech straight. Come, give us a taste of 460
your quality ; come, a passionate speech.

First Player. What speech, my good lord ?

Hamlet. I heard thee speak me a speech once, but it was never acted ; or, if it was, not above once ; for the play, I remember, pleased not the million ; 'twas caviare to the general : but it was—as I received it, and others, whose judgments in such matters cried in the top of mine—an excellent play, well digested in the scenes, set down with as much modesty as cunning. I remember one said there were no sallets in the lines to make the matter savoury, nor no matter in the phrase that might indict the author of affectation ; but called it an honest method, as wholesome as sweet, and by very much more handsome than fine. One speech in it I chiefly loved ; 'twas Æneas' tale to Dido ; and thereabout of it especially, where he speaks of Priam's slaughter. If it live in your memory, begin at this line : let me see, let me see :—

The rugged Pyrrhus, like the Hyrcanian beast,—
'tis not so, it begins with Pyrrhus :—

*The rugged Pyrrhus, he, whose sable arm,
Black as his purpose, did the night resemble
When he lay couched in the ominous horse,
Hath now this dread and black complexion smear'd
With heraldry more dismal ; head to foot
Now is he total gules ; horridly trick'd
With blood of fathers, mothers, daughters, sons,
Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets,
That lend a tyrannous and damned light
To their vile murders : roasted in wrath and fire,
And thus o'er-sized with coagulate gore,
With eyes like carbuncles, the hellish Pyrrhus
Old grandsire Priam seeks.*

So proceed you.

Polonius. 'Fore God, my lord, well spoken ; with good accent and good discretion.

First Player. *Anon, he finds him*
*Striking too short at Greeks ; his antique sword,
Rebellious to his arm, lies where it falls,
Repugnant to command. Unequal match'd,
Pyrrhus at Priam drives ; in rage strikes wide ;
But with the whiff and wind of his fell sword
The unnerved father falls. Then senseless Ilium,
Seeming to feel this blow, with flaming top
Stoops to his base, and with a hideous crash
Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear : for lo ! his sword,*

*Which was declining on the milky head
Of reverend Priam, seem'd i' the air to stick :
So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood,* 510
*And like a neutral to his will and matter,
Did nothing.*

*But, as we often see, against some storm,
A silence in the heavens, the rack stand still,
The bold winds speechless and the orb below* 515
*As hush as death, anon the dreadful thunder
Doth rend the region ; so, after Pyrrhus' pause,
Aroused vengeance sets him new a-work ;
And never did the Cyclops' hammers fall
On Mars's armour, forg'd for proof eterne,* 520
*With less remorse than Pyrrhus' bleeding sword
Now falls on Priam.*

*Out, out, thou vile thing, Fortune ! All you gods,
In general synod, take away her power ;
Break all the spokes and fellies from her wheel,* 525
*And bowl the round nave down the hill of heaven,
As low as to the fiends !*

Polonius. This is too long.

Hamlet. It shall to the barber's, with your beard.
Prithee, say on : he's for a jig or a tale, or he sleeps. 530
on : come to Hecuba.

First Player. But who, O ! who had seen the mobled queen—

Hamlet. 'The mobled queen ?'—

Polonius. That's good ; 'mobled queen' is good. 535

First Player. Run barefoot up and down, threat'ning the flames
*With bisson rheum ; a clout upon that head
Where late the diadem stood ; and, for a robe,
About her lank and all o'er-teemed loins,
A blanket, in the alarm of fear caught up ;* 540
*Who this had seen, with tongue in venom steep'd,
'Gainst Fortune's state would treason have pronounc'd :
But if the gods themselves did see her then,
When she saw Pyrrhus make malicious sport
In mincing with his sword her husband's limbs,* 545
*The instant burst of clamour that she made—
Unless things mortal move them not at all—
Would have made milch the burning eyes of heaven,
And passion in the gods.*

Polonius. Look ! wh'er he has not turned his colour 550
and has tears in's eyes. *Prithee, no more.*

Hamlet. 'Tis well ; I'll have thee speak out the rest

soon. Good my lord, will you see the players well bestowed ? Do you hear, let them be well used ; for they
are the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time : after
your death you were better have a bad epitaph than their
ill report while you live. 555

Polonius. My lord, I will use them according to their
desert. 560

Hamlet. God's bodikins, man, much better ; use every
man after his desert, and who should 'scape whipping ?
Use them after your own honour and dignity : the less
they deserve, the more merit is in your bounty. Take
them in. 565

Polonius. Come, sirs.

Hamlet. Follow him, friends : we'll hear a play to-
morrow. [*Exit POLONIUS, with all the Players but the*
First.] Dost thou hear me, old friend ; can you play the
Murder of Gonzago ? 570

First Player. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. We'll ha't to-morrow night. You could, for
a need, study a speech of some dozen or sixteen lines,
which I would set down and insert in't, could you not. 575

First Player. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Very well. Follow that lord ; and look you
mock him not. [*Exit First Player.*] [*To ROSENCRANTZ and*
GUILDENSTERN.] My good friends, I'll leave you till night ;
you are welcome to Elsinore. 580

Rosencrantz. Good my lord !

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Hamlet. Ay, so, God be wi' ye ! Now I am alone.
O ! what a rogue and peasant slave am I :
Is it not monstrous that this player here, 585
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting 590
With forms to his conceit ? and all for nothing !
For Hecuba !

What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba
That he should weep for her ? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion 595
That I have ? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,

Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears. 600
Yet I,

A dull and muddy-mettled rascal, peak,
Like John-a-dreams, unpregnant of my cause,
And can say nothing; no, not for a king,
Upon whose property and most dear life 605
A damn'd defeat was made. Am I a coward?
Who calls me villain? breaks my pate across?
Plucks off my beard and blows it in my face?
Tweaks me by the nose? gives me the lie i' the throat,
As deep as to the lungs? Who does me this? 610
Ha!

Swounds, I should take it, for it cannot be
But I am pigeon-liver'd, and lack gall
To make oppression bitter, or ere this
I should have fatted all the region kites 615
With this slave's offal. Bloody, beastly villain!
Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!
O! vengeance!

Why, what an ass am I! This is most brave
That I, the son of a dear father murder'd, 620
Prompted to my revenge by heaven and hell,
Must, vixen-like, unpack my heart with words,
And fall a-cursing, like a very drab,
A scullion!

Fie upon't! foh! About, my brain! I have heard, 625
That guilty creatures sitting at a play
Have by the very cunning of the scene
Been struck so to the soul that presently
They have proclaim'd their malefactions;
For murder, though it have no tongue, will speak 630
With most miraculous organ. I'll have these players
Play something like the murder of my father
Before mine uncle; I'll observe his looks;
I'll tent him to the quick: if he but blench
I know my course. The spirit that I have seen 635
May be the devil: and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy—

As he is very potent with such spirits—
Abuses me to damn me. I'll have grounds 640
More relative than this: the play's the thing
Wherein I'll catch the conscience of the king.

[Exit.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS, OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. And can you, by no drift of circumstance,
Get from him why he puts on this confusion,
Grating so harshly all his days of quiet
With turbulent and dangerous lunacy ?

Rosencrantz. He does confess he feels himself distracted ; 5
But from what cause he will by no means speak.

Guildenstern. Nor do we find him forward to be sounded,
But, with a crafty madness, keeps aloof,
When we would bring him on to some confession
Of his true state.

Queen. Did he receive you well ? 10

Rosencrantz. Most like a gentleman.

Guildenstern. But with much forcing of his disposition.

Rosencrantz. Niggard of question, but of our demands
Most free in his reply.

Queen. Did you assay him
To any pastime ? 15

Rosencrantz. Madam, it so fell out that certain players
We o'er-raught on the way ; of these we told him,
And there did seem in him a kind of joy
To hear of it : they are about the court,
And, as I think, they have already order 20
This night to play before him.

Polonius. 'Tis most true ;
And he beseech'd me to entreat your majesties
To hear and see the matter.

King. With all my heart ; and it doth much content me
To hear him so inclin'd. 25

Good gentlemen, give him a further edge,
And drive his purpose on to these delights.

Rosencrantz. We shall, my lord.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

King. Sweet Gertrude, leave us too ;
For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,
That he, as 'twere by accident, may here 30
Affront Ophelia.

Her father and myself, lawful espials,
Will so bestow ourselves, that, seeing, unseen,

We may of their encounter frankly judge,
 And gather by him, as he is behav'd, 35
 If 't be the affliction of his love or no
 That thus he suffers for.

Queen. I shall obey you.
 And for your part, Ophelia, I do wish
 That your good beauties be the happy cause
 Of Hamlet's wildness; so shall I hope your virtues 40
 Will bring him to his wonted way again,
 To both your honours.

Ophelia. Madam, I wish it may. [Exit QUEEN.]

Polonius. Ophelia, walk you here. Gracious, so please you,
 We will bestow ourselves. [To OPHELIA.] Read on this book;
 That show of such an exercise may colour 45
 Your loneliness. We are oft to blame in this,
 'Tis too much prov'd, that with devotion's visage
 And pious action we do sugar o'er
 The devil himself.

King. [Aside.] O! 'tis too true;
 How smart a lash that speech doth give my conscience! 50
 The wanton's cheek, beautied with plastering art,
 Is not more ugly to the thing that helps it
 Than is my deed to my most painted word:
 O heavy burden!

Polonius. I hear him coming; let's withdraw, my lord. 55
[Exeunt KING and POLONIUS.]

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. To be, or not to be: that is the question:
 Whether 'tis nobler in the mind to suffer
 The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
 Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
 And by opposing end them? To die: to sleep; 60
 No more: and, by a sleep to say we end
 The heart-ache and the thousand natural shocks
 That flesh is heir to, 'tis a consummation
 Devoutly to be wish'd. To die, to sleep;
 To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub; 65
 For in that sleep of death what dreams may come
 When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
 Must give us pause. There's the respect
 That makes calamity of so long life;
 For who would bear the whips and scorns of time, 70

The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
 The pangs of dispriz'd love, the law's delay,
 The insolence of office, and the spurns
 That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
 When he himself might his quietus make 75
 With a bare bodkin ? who would fardels bear,
 To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
 But that the dread of something after death,
 The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
 No traveller returns, puzzles the will, 80
 And makes us rather bear those ills we have
 Than fly to others that we know not of ?
 Thus conscience does make cowards of us all ;
 And thus the native hue of resolution
 Is sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought, 85
 And enterprises of great pith and moment
 With this regard their currents turn awry,
 And lose the name of action. Soft you now !
 The fair Ophelia ! Nymph, in thy orisons
 Be all my sins remembered.

Ophelia. Good my lord, 90

How does your honour for this many a day ?

Hamlet. I humbly thank you ; well, well, well.

Ophelia. My lord, I have remembrances of yours,
 That I have longed long to re-deliver ;
 I pray you, now receive them.

Hamlet. No, not I ; 95

I never gave you aught.

Ophelia. My honour'd lord, you know right well you did ;
 And, with them, words of so sweet breath compos'd
 As made the things more rich : their perfume lost,
 Take these again ; for to the noble mind 100
 Rich gifts wax poor when givers prove unkind.
 There, my lord.

Hamlet. Ha, ha ! are you honest ?

Ophelia. My lord !

Hamlet. Are you fair ? 105

Ophelia. What means your lordship ?

Hamlet. That if you be honest and fair, your honesty
 should admit no discourse to your beauty.

Ophelia. Could beauty, my lord, have better commerce 110
 than with honesty ?

Hamlet. Ay, truly ; for the power of beauty will sooner
 transform honesty from what it is than the force of honesty

can translate beauty into his likeness : this was sometime 115
a paradox, but now the time gives it proof. I did love
thee once.

Ophelia. Indeed, my lord, you made me believe so.

Hamlet. You should not have believed me ; for virtue 120
cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it :
I loved you not.

Ophelia. I was the more deceived.

Hamlet. Get thee to a nunnery : why wouldst thou be
a breeder of sinners ? I am myself indifferent honest ; but 125
yet I could accuse me of such things that it were better my
mother had not borne me. I am very proud, revengeful,
ambitious ; with more offences at my beck than I have 130
thoughts to put them in, imagination to give them shape,
or time to act them in. What should such fellows as I do
crawling between heaven and earth ? We are arrant
knaves, all ; believe none of us. Go thy ways to a nun- 135
nery. Where's your father ?

Ophelia. At home, my lord.

Hamlet. Let the doors be shut upon him, that he may
play the fool nowhere but in's own house. Farewell.

Ophelia. O ! help him, you sweet heavens ! 140

Hamlet. If thou dost marry, I'll give thee this plague
for thy dowry : be thou as chaste as ice, as pure as snow,
thou shalt not escape calumny. Get thee to a nunnery, go ;
farewell. Or, if thou wilt needs marry, marry a fool ; for 145
wise men know well enough what monsters you make of
them. To a nunnery, go ; and quickly too. Farewell.

Ophelia. O heavenly powers, restore him !

Hamlet. I have heard of your paintings too, well 150
enough ; God hath given you one face, and you make
yourselves another : you jig, you amble, and you lisp,
and nickname God's creatures, and make your wanton-
ness your ignorance. Go to, I'll no more on't ; it hath 155
made me mad. I say, we will have no more marriages ;
those that are married already, all but one, shall live ; the
rest shall keep as they are. To a nunnery, go. *[Exit.]*

Ophelia. O ! what a noble mind is here o'er-thrown :
The courtier's, soldier's, scholar's, eye, tongue, sword ; 160
The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observ'd of all observers, quite, quite down !
And I, of ladies most deject and wretched,
That suck'd the honey of his music vows, 165

Now see that noble and most sovereign reason,
 Like sweet bells jangled, out of tune and harsh ;
 That unmatch'd form and feature of blown youth
 Blasted with ecstasy : O ! woe is me,
 To have seen what I have seen, see what I see ! 170

Re-enter KING and POLONIUS.

King. Love ! his affections do not that way tend ;
 Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
 Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
 O'er which his melancholy sits on brood ;
 And, I do doubt, the hatch and the disclose 175
 Will be some danger ; which for to prevent,
 I have in quick determination

Thus set it down : he shall with speed to England,
 For the demand of our neglected tribute :
 Haply the seas and countries different 180
 With variable objects shall expel

This something-settled matter in his heart,
 Whereon his brains still beating puts him thus
 From fashion of himself. What think you on't ?

Polonius. It shall do well : but yet do I believe 185
 The origin and commencement of his grief

Sprung from neglected love. How now, Ophelia !
 You need not tell us what Lord Hamlet said ;
 We heard it all. My lord, do as you please ;
 But, if you hold it fit, after the play, 190

Let his queen mother all alone entreat him
 To show his griefs : let her be round with him ;
 And I'll be plac'd, so please you, in the ear
 Of all their conference. If she find him not,
 To England send him, or confine him where 195
 Your wisdom best shall think.

King. It shall be so :
 Madness in great ones must not unwatch'd go. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle.*

Enter HAMLET and certain Players.

Hamlet. Speak the speech, I pray you, as I pronounced
 it to you, trippingly on the tongue ; but if you mouth it,
 as many of your players do, I had as lief the town-crier
 spoke my lines. Nor do not saw the air too much with 5
 your hand, thus ; but use all gently : for in the very

torrent, tempest, and—as I may say—whirlwind of passion you must acquire and beget a temperance, that may give it smoothness. O ! it offends me to the soul to hear a robustious periwig-pated fellow tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings, who for the most part are capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb-shows and noise : I would have such a fellow whipped for o'er-doing Termagant ; it out-herods Herod : pray you, avoid it. 10 15

First Player. I warrant your honour.

Hamlet. Be not too tame neither, but let your own discretion be your tutor : suit the action to the word, the word to the action ; with this special observance, that you o'erstep not the modesty of nature ; for anything so overdone is from the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the first and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the mirror up to nature ; to show virtue her own feature, scorn her own image, and the very age and body of the time his form and pressure. Now, this overdone, or come tardy off, though it make the unskilful laugh, cannot but make the judicious grieve ; the censure of which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others. O ! there be players that I have seen play, and heard others praise, and that highly, not to speak it profanely, that, neither having the accent of Christians nor the gait of Christian, pagan, nor man, have so strutted and bellowed that I have thought some of nature's journeymen had made men and not made them well, they imitated humanity so abominably. 20 25 30 35 40

First Player. I hope we have reformed that indifferently with us.

Hamlet. O ! reform it altogether. And let those that play your clowns speak no more than is set down for them ; for there be of them that will themselves laugh, to set on some quantity of barren spectators to laugh too, though in the mean time some necessary question of the play be then to be considered ; that's villanous, and shows a most pitiful ambition in the fool that uses it. Go, make you ready. 45 50

[*Exeunt Players.*]

Enter POLONIUS, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

How now, my lord ! will the king hear this piece of work ?

Polonius. And the queen too, and that presently

Hamlet. Bid the players make haste. [*Exit* POLONIUS.

Will you two help to hasten them ?

55

Rosencrantz. We will, my lord.
(Guildenstern.)

[Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Hamlet. What, ho ! Horatio !

Enter HORATIO.

Horatio. Here, sweet lord, at your service.

Hamlet. Horatio, thou art e'en as just a man
 As e'er my conversation cop'd withal.

60

Horatio. O ! my dear lord,—

Hamlet. Nay, do not think I flatter ;
 For what advancement may I hope from thee,
 That no revenue hast but thy good spirits
 To feed and clothe thee ? Why should the poor be flatter'd ?
 No ; let the candied tongue lick absurd pomp,
 And crook the pregnant hinges of the knee
 Where thrift may follow fawning. Dost thou hear ?
 Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice
 And could of men distinguish, her election

70

Hath seal'd thee for herself ; for thou hast been
 As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing,
 A man that fortune's buffets and rewards
 Hast ta'en with equal thanks ; and bless'd are those
 Whose blood and judgment are so well comingled
 That they are not a pipe for fortune's finger
 To sound what stop she please. Give me that man
 That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him
 In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart,
 As I do thee. Something too much of this.

75

There is a play to-night before the king ;
 One scene of it comes near the circumstance
 Which I have told thee of my father's death :

80

I prithee, when thou seest that act afoot,
 Even with the very comment of thy soul
 Observe mine uncle ; if his occulted guilt

85

Do not itself unkennel in one speech,
 It is a damned ghost that we have seen,
 And my imaginations are as foul
 As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note ;
 For I mine eyes will rivet to his face,
 And after we will both our judgments join
 In censure of his seeming.

90

Horatio.

Well, my lord :

If he steal aught the whilst this play is playing,
And 'scape detecting, I will pay the theft.

Hamlet. They are coming to the play ; I must be idle : 95
Get you a place.

*Danish march. A Flourish. Enter KING, QUEEN, POLONIUS,
OPHELIA, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, and Others.*

King. How fares our cousin Hamlet ?

Hamlet. Excellent, i' faith ; of the chameleon's dish :
I eat the air, promise-crammed ; you cannot feed capons so. 100

King. I have nothing with this answer, Hamlet ; these
words are not mine.

Hamlet. No, nor mine now. [*To POLONIUS.*] My lord,
you played once i' the university, you say ? 105

Polonius. That did I, my lord, and was accounted a
good actor.

Hamlet. And what did you enact ?

Polonius. I did enact Julius Cæsar : I was killed i' the
Capitol ; Brutus killed me. 110

Hamlet. It was a brute part of him to kill so capital
a calf there. Be the players ready ?

Rosencrantz. Ay, my lord ; they stay upon your
patience.

Queen. Come hither, my good Hamlet, sit by me. 115

Hamlet. No, good mother, here's metal more attractive.

Polonius. [*To the KING.*] O ho ! do you mark that ?

Hamlet. Lady, shall I lie in your lap ? 120

[*Lying down at OPHELIA's feet.*]

Ophelia. No, my lord.

Hamlet. I mean, my head upon your lap ?

Ophelia. Ay, my lord. You are merry, my lord. 130

Hamlet. Who, I ?

Ophelia. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. O God, your only jig-maker. What should a
man do but be merry ? for, look you, how cheerfully my 135
mother looks, and my father died within's two hours.

Ophelia. Nay, 'tis twice two months, my lord.

Hamlet. So long ? Nay, then, let the devil wear black,
for I'll have a suit of sables. O heavens ! die two months 140
ago, and not forgotten yet ? Then there's hope a great
man's memory may outlive his life half a year ; but, by'r
lady, he must build churches then, or else shall he suffer
not thinking on, with the hobby-horse, whose epitaph is, 145
' For, O ! for, O ! the hobby-horse is forgot.'

Hautboys play. The dumb-show enters.

Enter a King and a Queen, very lovingly ; the Queen embracing him, and he her. She kneels, and makes show of protestation unto him. He takes her up, and declines his head upon her neck ; lays him down upon a bank of flowers : she, seeing him asleep, leaves him. Anon comes in a fellow, takes off his crown, kisses it, and pours poison in the King's ears, and exit. The Queen returns, finds the King dead, and makes passionate action. The Poisoner, with some two or three Mutes, comes in again, seeming to lament with her. The dead body is carried away. The Poisoner wooes the Queen with gifts ; she seems loath and unwilling awhile, but in the end accepts his love. [Exeunt.

Ophelia. What means this, my lord ?

Hamlet. Marry, this is miching mallecho ; it means mischief.

Ophelia. Belike this show imports the argument of the play. 150

Enter Prologue.

Hamlet. We shall know by this fellow : the players cannot keep counsel ; they'll tell all.

Ophelia. Will he tell us what this show meant ?

Hamlet. Ay, or any show that you'll show him. 155

Ophelia. I'll mark the play.

Prologue. For us and for our tragedy, 160
Here stooping to your clemency,
We beg your hearing patiently.

Hamlet. Is this a prologue, or the posy of a ring ?

Ophelia. 'Tis brief, my lord. 165

Hamlet. As woman's love.

Enter two Players, King and Queen.

Player King. Full thirty times hath Phœbus' cart gone round

*Neptune's salt wash and Tellus' orb'd ground,
And thirty dozen moons with borrow'd sheen
About the world have times twelve thirties been, 170
Since love our hearts and Hymen did our hands
Unite commutual in most sacred bands.*

Player Queen. So many journeys may the sun and moon
Make us again count o'er ere love be done !
But, woe is me ! you are so sick of late, 175

*So far from cheer and from your former state,
That I distrust you. Yet, though I distrust,
Discomfort you, my lord, it nothing must ;
For women's fear and love holds quantity,
In neither aught, or in extremity.* 180

*Now, what my love is, proof hath made you know ;
And as my love is siz'd, my fear is so.*

*Where love is great, the littlest doubts are fear ;
Where little fears grow great, great love grows there.*

*Player King. Faith, I must leave thee, love, and shortly too ;
My operant powers their functions leave to do : 185
And thou shalt live in this fair world behind,
Honour'd, belov'd ; and haply one as kind
For husband shalt thou—*

*Player Queen. O ! confound the rest ;
Such love must needs be treason in my breast : 190
In second husband let me be accurst ;
None wed the second but who kill'd the first.*

Hamlet. [Aside.] Wormwood, wormwood.

*Player Queen. The instances that second marriage move,
Are base respects of thrift, but none of love ; 195
A second time I kill my husband dead,
When second husband kisses me in bed.*

*Player King. I do believe you think what now you speak ;
But what we do determine oft we break.
Purpose is but the slave to memory, 200
Of violent birth, but poor validity ;
Which now, like fruit unripe, sticks on the tree,
But fall unshaken when they mellow be.
Most necessary 'tis that we forget*

*To pay ourselves what to ourselves is debt ; 205
What to ourselves in passion we propose,
The passion ending, doth the purpose lose.
The violence of either grief or joy*

*Their own enactures with themselves destroy ;
Where joy most revels grief doth most lament, 210
Grief joys, joy grieves, on slender accident.*

*This world is not for aye, nor 'tis not strange,
That even our love should with our fortunes change ;
For 'tis a question left us yet to prove
Wher love lead fortune or else fortune love. 215*

*The great man down, you mark his favourite flies ;
The poor advanc'd makes friends of enemies.
And hitherto doth love on fortune tend,*

*For who not needs shall never lack a friend ;
And who in want a hollow friend doth try* 220
Directly seasons him his enemy.

*But, orderly to end where I begun,
Our wills and fates do so contrary run
That our devices still are overthrown,
Our thoughts are ours, their ends none of our own :* 225
*So think thou wilt no second husband wed ;
But die thy thoughts when thy first lord is dead.*

*Player Queen. Nor earth to me give food, nor heaven light !
Sport and repose lock from me day and night !
To desperation turn my trust and hope !* 230

*An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope !
Each opposite that blanks the face of joy
Meet what I would have well, and it destroy !
Both here and hence pursue me lasting strife,
If, once a widow, ever I be wife !* 235

Hamlet. If she should break it now !

*Player King. 'Tis deeply sworn. Sweet, leave me here awhile ;
My spirits grow dull, and fain I would beguile
The tedious day with sleep.* [*Sleeps.*]

*Player Queen. Sleep rock thy brain ;
And never come mischance between us twain !* [*Exit.* 240

Hamlet. Madam, how like you this play ?

Queen. The lady doth protest too much, methinks.

Hamlet. O ! but she'll keep her word.

King. Have you heard the argument ? Is there no 245
offence in't ?

*Hamlet. No, no, they do but jest, poison in jest ; no
offence i' the world.*

King. What do you call the play ?

Hamlet. The Mouse-trap. Marry, how ? Tropically. 250
*This play is the image of a murder done in Vienna : Gon-
zago is the duke's name ; his wife, Baptista. You shall
see anon ; 'tis a knavish piece of work : but what of that ?
your majesty and we that have free souls, it touches us* 255
not : let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung.

Enter Player as Lucianus.

This is one Lucianus, nephew to the king.

Ophelia. You are a good chorus, my lord.

Hamlet. I could interpret between you and your love, 260
if I could see the puppets dallying.

Ophelia. Still better, and worse. 265

Hamlet. So you must take your husbands. Begin, murderer : leave thy damnable faces, and begin. Come ; the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge.

Lucianus. *Thoughts black, hands apt, drugs fit, and time agreeing ;* 270

*Confederate season, else no creature seeing ;
Thou mixture rank, of midnight weeds collected,
With Hecate's ban thrice blasted, thrice infected,
Thy natural magic and dire property,
On wholesome life usurp immediately.* 275

[Pours the poison into the Sleeper's ears.]

Hamlet. He poisons him i' the garden for's estate. His name's Gonzago : the story is extant, and writ in very choice Italian. You shall see anon how the murderer gets the love of Gonzago's wife. 280

Ophelia. The king rises.

Hamlet. What ! frightened with false fire ?

Queen. How fares my lord ?

Polonius. Give o'er the play.

King. Give me some light : away ! 285

All. Lights, lights, lights !

[Exeunt all except HAMLET and HORATIO.]

Hamlet. Why, let the stricken deer go weep,
The hart ungalled play ;
For some must watch, while some must sleep :
So runs the world away. 290

Would not this, sir, and a forest of feathers, if the rest of my fortunes turn Turk with me, with two Provincial roses on my razed shoes, get me a fellowship in a cry of players, sir ?

Horatio. Half a share. 295

Hamlet. A whole one, I.

For thou dost know, O Damon dear,
This realm dismantled was
Of Jove himself ; and now reigns here
A very, very—pajock. 300

Horatio. You might have rimed.

Hamlet. O good Horatio ! I'll take the ghost's word for a thousand pound. Didst perceive ?

Horatio. Very well, my lord.

Hamlet. Upon the talk of the poisoning ? 305

Horatio. I did very well note him.

Hamlet. Ah, ha ! Come, some music ! come, the recorders !

For if the king like not the comedy,
 Why then, belike he likes it not, perdy. 310
 Come, some music !

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Guildestern. Good my lord, vouchsafe me a word with you.

Hamlet. Sir, a whole history.

Guildestern. The king, sir,— 315

Hamlet. Ay, sir, what of him ?

Guildestern. Is in his retirement marvellous distempered.

Hamlet. With drink, sir ?

Guildestern. No, my lord, rather with choler. 320

Hamlet. Your wisdom should show itself more richer to signify this to his doctor ; for, for me to put him to his purgation would perhaps plunge him into far more choler.

Guildestern. Good my lord, put your discourse into 325 some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.

Hamlet. I am tame, sir ; pronounce.

Guildestern. The queen, your mother, in most great affliction of spirit, hath sent me to you. 330

Hamlet. You are welcome.

Guildestern. Nay, good my lord, this courtesy is not of the right breed. It it shall please you to make me a wholesome answer, I will do your mother's commandment ; 335 if not, your pardon and my return shall be the end of my business.

Hamlet. Sir, I cannot.

Guildestern. What, my lord ?

Hamlet. Make you a wholesome answer ; my wit's 340 diseased ; but, sir, such answer as I can make, you shall command ; or, rather, as you say, my mother : therefore no more, but to the matter : my mother, you say,—

Rosencrantz. Then, thus she says : your behaviour 345 hath struck her into amazement and admiration.

Hamlet. O wonderful son, that can so astonish a mother ! But is there no sequel at the heels of this mother's admiration ? Impart.

Rosencrantz. She desires to speak with you in her closet 350 ere you go to bed.

Hamlet. We shall obey, were she ten times our mother. Have you any further trade with us ?

Rosencrantz. My lord, you once did love me.

Hamlet. So I do still, by these pickers and stealers. 355

Rosencrantz. Good my lord, what is your cause of discontenter ? you do surely bar the door upon your own liberty, if you deny your griefs to your friend. 360

Hamlet. Sir, I lack advancement.

Rosencrantz. How can that be when you have the voice of the king himself for your succession in Denmark ?

Hamlet. Ay, sir, but 'While the grass grows,'—the 365
proverb is something musty.

Enter Players, with recorders.

O ! the recorders : let me see one. To withdraw with you : why do you go about to recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil ?

Guildestern. O ! my lord, if my duty be too bold, my 370
love is too unmannerly.

Hamlet. I do not well understand that. Will you play upon this pipe ?

Guildestern. My lord, I cannot.

Hamlet. I pray you. 375

Guildestern. Believe me, I cannot.

Hamlet. I do beseech you.

Guildestern. I know no touch of it, my lord.

Hamlet. 'Tis as easy as lying ; govern these ventages 380
with your finger and thumb, give it breath with your mouth, and it will discourse most eloquent music. Look you, these are the stops.

Guildestern. But these cannot I command to any utterance of harmony ; I have not the skill. 385

Hamlet. Why, look you now, how unworthy a thing you make of me. You would play upon me ; you would seem to know my stops ; you would pluck out the heart of my mystery ; you would sound me from my lowest note 390
to the top of my compass ; and there is much music, excellent voice, in this little organ, yet cannot you make it speak. 'Sblood, do you think I am easier to be played on than a pipe ? Call me what instrument you will, though 395
you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.

Enter POLONIUS.

God bless you, sir !

Polonius. My lord, the queen would speak with you, and presently.

Hamlet. Do you see yonder cloud that's almost in
shape of a camel ? 400

Polonius. By the mass, and 'tis like a camel, indeed.

Hamlet. Methinks it is like a weasel.

Polonius. It is backed like a weasel.

Hamlet. Or like a whale ? 405

Polonius. Very like a whale.

Hamlet. Then I will come to my mother by and by.
[*Aside.*] They fool me to the top of my bent. [*Aloud.*] I
will come by and by.

Polonius. I will say so. [*Exit.* 410

Hamlet. By and by is easily said. Leave me, friends.

[*Exeunt all but HAMLET.*

'Tis now the very witching time of night,
When churchyards yawn and hell itself breathes out
Contagion to this world : now could I drink hot blood, 415
And do such bitter business as the day
Would quake to look on. Soft ! now to my mother.
O heart ! lose not thy nature ; let not ever
The soul of Nero enter this firm bosom ;
Let me be cruel, not unnatural ; 420
I will speak daggers to her, but use none ;
My tongue and soul in this be hypocrites ;
How in my words soever she be shent,
To give them seals never, my soul, consent ! [*Exit.*

SCENE III.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter KING, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. I like him not, nor stands it safe with us
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you ;
I your commission will forthwith dispatch,
And he to England shall along with you. 5
The terms of our estate may not endure
Hazard so dangerous as doth hourly grow
Out of his lunacies.

Guildestern. We will ourselves provide.
Most holy and religious fear it is
To keep those many many bodies safe
That live and feed upon your majesty. 10

Rosencrantz. The single and peculiar life is bound
With all the strength and armour of the mind
To keep itself from noyance ; but much more
That spirit upon whose weal depend and rest

The lives of many. The cease of majesty
 Dies not alone, but, like a gulf doth draw
 What's near it with it : it is a massy wheel,
 Fix'd on the summit of the highest mount,
 To whose huge spokes ten thousand lesser things
 Are mortis'd and adjoin'd ; which, when it falls, 20
 Each small annexment, petty consequence,
 Attends the boisterous ruin. Never alone
 Did the king sigh, but with a general groan.

King. Arm you, I pray you, to this speedy voyage :
 For we will fetters put upon this fear, 25
 Which now goes too free-footed.

Rosencrantz.

Guildestern.

We will haste us.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Enter POLONIUS.

Polonius. My lord, he's going to his mother's closet :
 Behind the arras I'll convey myself
 To hear the process ; I'll warrant she'll tax him home ;
 And, as you said, and wisely was it said, 30
 'Tis meet that some more audience than a mother,
 Since nature makes them partial, should o'erhear
 The speech, of vantage. Fare you well, my liege :
 I'll call upon you ere you go to bed
 And tell you what I know.

King. Thanks, dear my lord. 35

[*Exit POLONIUS.*]

O ! my offence is rank, it smells to heaven ;
 It hath the primal eldest curse upon't ;
 A brother's murder ! Pray can I not,
 Though inclination be as sharp as will :
 My stronger guilt defeats my strong intent ; 40
 And, like a man to double business bound,
 I stand in pause where I shall first begin,
 And both neglect. What if this cursed hand
 Were thicker than itself with brother's blood,
 Is there not rain enough in the sweet heavens 45
 To wash it white as snow ! Whereto serves mercy
 But to confront the visage of offence ?
 And what's in prayer but this two-fold force,
 To be forestalled, ere we come to fall,
 Or pardon'd, being down ? Then, I'll look up : 50
 My fault is past. But, O ! what form of prayer

Can serve my turn ? ' Forgive me my foul murder ? '
 That cannot be ; since I am still possess'd
 Of those effects for which I did the murder,
 My crown, mine own ambition, and my queen. 55
 May one be pardon'd and retain the offence ?
 In the corrupted currents of this world
 Offence's gilded hand may shove by justice,
 And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
 Buys out the law ; but 'tis not so above ; 60
 There is no shuffling, there the action lies
 In his true nature, and we ourselves compell'd
 Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
 To give in evidence. What then ? what rests ?
 Try what repentance can : what can it not ? 65
 Yet what can it, when one can not repent ?
 O wretched state ! O bosom black as death !
 O limed soul, that struggling to be free
 Art more engaged ! Help, angels ! make assay ;
 Bow, stubborn knees ; and heart with strings of steel 70
 Be soft as sinews of the new-born babe.
 All may be well. *[Retires and kneels.]*

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. Now might I do it pat, now he is praying ;
 And now I'll do't : and so he goes to heaven ;
 And so am I reveng'd. That would be scann'd : 75
 A villain kills my father ; and for that,
 I, his sole son, do this same villain send
 To heaven.
 Why, this is hire and salary, not revenge.
 He took my father grossly, full of bread, 80
 With all his crimes broad blown, as flush as May ;
 And how his audit stands who knows save heaven ?
 But in our circumstance and course of thought
 'Tis heavy with him. And am I then reveng'd,
 To take him in the purging of his soul, 85
 When he is fit and season'd for his passage ?
 No.
 Up, sword, and know thou a more horrid hent ;
 When he is drunk asleep, or in his rage, 89
 At gaming, swearing, or about some act
 That has no relish of salvation in't ;
 Then trip him, that his heels may kick at heaven,
 And that his soul may be as damn'd and black

As hell, whereto it goes. My mother stays : 95
 This physic but prolongs thy sickly days. [Exit.

The KING rises and advances.

King. My words fly up, my thoughts remain below :
 Words without thoughts never to heaven go. [Exit.

SCENE IV.—*The QUEEN'S Apartment.*

Enter QUEEN and POLONIUS.

Polonius. He will come straight. Look you lay home to him ;

Tell him his pranks have been too broad to bear with,
 And that your Grace hath screen'd and stood between
 Much heat and him. I'll silence me e'en here.

Pray you, be round with him. 5

Hamlet. [Within.] Mother, mother, mother !

Queen. I'll warrant you ;

Fear me not. Withdraw, I hear him coming.

[POLONIUS *hides behind the arras.*

Enter HAMLET.

Hamlet. Now, mother, what's the matter ?

Queen. Hamlet, thou hast thy father much offended.

Hamlet. Mother, you have my father much offended. 10

Queen. Come, come, you answer with an idle tongue.

Hamlet. Go, go, you question with a wicked tongue.

Queen. Why, how now, Hamlet !

Hamlet. What's the matter now ?

Queen. Have you forgot me ?

Hamlet. No, by the rood, not so :

You are the queen, your husband's brother's wife ; 15
 And,—would it were not so !—you are my mother.

Queen. Nay then, I'll set those to you that can speak.

Hamlet. Come, come, and sit you down ; you shall not
 budge :

You go not, till I set you up a glass

Where you may see the inmost part of you. 20

Queen. What wilt thou do ? thou wilt not murder me !
 Help, help, ho !

Polonius. [Behind.] What, ho ! help ! help ! help !

Hamlet. [Draws.] How now ! a rat ! Dead, for a ducat,
 dead ! [Makes a pass through the arras.

Polonius. [*Behind.*] O! I am slain.

Queen. O me! what hast thou done? 25

Hamlet. Nay, I know not: is it the king?

Queen. O! what a rash and bloody deed is this!

Hamlet. A bloody deed! almost as bad, good mother,
As kill a king, and marry with his brother.

Queen. As kill a king!

Hamlet. Ay, lady, 'twas my word. 30

[*Lifts up the arras and discovers* POLONIUS.]

[*To* POLONIUS.] Thou wretched, rash, intruding fool, farewell!

I took thee for thy better; take thy fortune;

Thou find'st to be too busy is some danger.

Leave wringing of your hands: peace! sit you down,

And let me wring your heart; for so I shall 35

If it be made of penetrable stuff,

If damned custom have not brass'd it so

That it is proof and bulwark against sense.

Queen. What have I done that thou dar'st wag thy tongue
In noise so rude against me?

Hamlet. Such an act 40

That blurs the grace and blush of modesty,

Calls virtue hypocrite, takes off the rose

From the fair forehead of an innocent love

And sets a blister there, makes marriage vows

As false as dicers' oaths; O! such a deed 45

As from the body of contraction plucks

The very soul, and sweet religion makes

A rhapsody of words; heaven's face doth glow,

Yea, this solidity and compound mass, 50

With tristful visage, as against the doom,

Is thought-sick at the act.

Queen. Ay me! what act,
That roars so loud and thunders in the index?

Hamlet. Look here, upon this picture, and on this;

The counterfeit presentment of two brothers.

See, what a grace was seated on this brow; 55

Hyperion's curls, the front of Jove himself,

An eye like Mars, to threaten and command,

A station like the herald Mercury

New-lighted on a heaven-kissing hill,

A combination and a form indeed, 60

Where every god did seem to set his seal,

To give the world assurance of a man.

This was your husband: look you now, what follows.

Here is your husband ; like a mildew'd ear,
 Blasting his wholesome brother. Have you eyes ? 65
 Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed,
 And batten on this moor ? Ha ! have you eyes ?
 You cannot call it love, for at your age
 The hey-day in the blood is tame, it's humble,
 And waits upon the judgment ; and what judgment 70
 Would step from this to this ? Sense, sure, you have,
 Else could you not have motion ; but sure, that sense
 Is apoplex'd ; for madness would not err,
 Nor sense to ecstasy was ne'er so thrall'd
 But it reserv'd some quantity of choice, 75
 To serve in such a difference. What devil was't
 That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind ?
 Eyes without feeling, feeling without sight,
 Ears without hands or eyes, smelling sans all,
 Or but a sickly part of one true sense 80
 Could not so mope.

O shame ! where is thy blush ? Rebellious hell,
 If thou canst mutine in a matron's bones,
 To flaming youth let virtue be as wax,
 And melt in her own fire : proclaim no shame 85
 When the compulsive ardour gives the charge,
 Since frost itself as actively doth burn,
 And reason panders will.

Queen. O Hamlet ! speak no more ;
 Thou turn'st mine eyes into my very soul ;
 And there I see such black and grained spots 90
 As will not leave their tinct.

Hamlet. Nay, but to live,
 Stew'd in corruption, honeying and making love
 Over the nasty sty,—

Queen. O ! speak to me no more ;
 These words like daggers enter in mine ears ; 95
 No more, sweet Hamlet ! .

Hamlet. A murderer, and a villain ;
 A slave that is not twentieth part the tithe
 Of your precedent lord ; a vice of kings ;
 A cut-purse of the empire and the rule,
 That from a shelf the precious diadem stole, 100
 And put it in his pocket !

Queen. No more !

Hamlet. A king of shreds and patches,—

Enter Ghost.

Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings,
You heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure?

Queen. Alas! he's mad! 105

Hamlet. Do you not come your tardy son to chide,
That, laps'd in time and passion, lets go by
The important acting of your dread command?
O! say.

Ghost. Do not forget: this visitation
Is but to whet thy almost blunted purpose. 110
But, look! amazement on thy mother sits;
O! step between her and her fighting soul;
Conceit in weakest bodies strongest works:
Speak to her, Hamlet.

Hamlet. How is it with you, lady?

Queen. Alas! how is't with you, 115
That you do bend your eye on vacancy
And with the incorporal air do hold discourse?
Forth at your eyes your spirits wildly peep;
And, as the sleeping soldiers in the alarm,
Your bedded hair, like life in excrements, 120
Starts up and stands an end. O gentle son!
Upon the heat and flame of thy distemper
Sprinkle cool patience. Whereon do you look?

Hamlet. On him, on him! Look you, how pale he glares!
His form and cause conjoin'd, preaching to stones, 125
Would make them capable. Do not look upon me;
Lest with this piteous action you convert
My stern effects: then what I have to do
Will want true colour; tears perchance for blood.

Queen. To whom do you speak this?

Hamlet. Do you see nothing there? 130

Queen. Nothing at all; yet all that is I see.

Hamlet. Nor did you nothing hear?

Queen. No, nothing but ourselves.

Hamlet. Why, look you there! look, how it steals away;
My father, in his habit as he liv'd;
Look! where he goes, even now, out at the portal. 135

[*Exit Ghost.*]

Queen. This is the very coinage of your brain:
This bodiless creation ecstasy
Is very cunning in.

Hamlet. Ecstasy!

My pulse, as yours, doth temperately keep time, 140
 And makes as healthful music. It is not madness
 That I have utter'd : bring me to the test,
 And I the matter will re-word, which madness
 Would gambol from. Mother, for love of grace,
 Lay not that flattering unction to your soul, 145
 That not your trespass but my madness speaks ;
 It will but skin and film the ulcerous place,
 Whiles rank corruption, mining all within,
 Infects unseen. Confess yourself to heaven ;
 Repent what's past ; avoid what is to come ; 150
 And do not spread the compost on the weeds
 To make them ranker. Forgive me this my virtue ;
 For in the fatness of these pursy times
 Virtue itself of vice must pardon beg,
 Yea, curb and woo for leave to do him good. 155

Queen. O Hamlet ! thou hast cleft my heart in twain.

Hamlet. O ! throw away the worser part of it,
 And live the purer with the other half.

Good night ;
 Assume a virtue, if you have it not. 160
 That monster, custom, who all sense doth eat,
 Of habits devil, is angel yet in this,
 That to the use of actions fair and good
 He likewise gives a frock or livery,
 That aptly is put on. Refrain to-night ; 165
 And that shall lend a kind of easiness
 To the next abstinence : the next more easy ;
 For use almost can change the stamp of nature,
 And master ev'n the devil or throw him out
 With wondrous potency. Once more, good-night : 170
 And when you are desirous to be bless'd,
 I'll blessing beg of you. For this same lord,

[*Pointing to* POLONIUS.]

I do repent : but heaven hath pleas'd it so,
 To punish me with this, and this with me,
 That I must be their scourge and minister. 175
 I will bestow him, and will answer well
 The death I gave him. So, again, good-night.
 I must be cruel only to be kind :
 Thus bad begins and worse remains behind.
 One word more, good lady.

Queen. What shall I do ? 180

Hamlet. Not this, by no means, that I bid you do :

Let the bloat king tempt you again to him ;
 Pinch wanton on your cheek : call you his mouse ;
 And let him, for a pair of reechy kisses,
 Or paddling in your neck with his damn'd fingers, 185
 Make you to ravel all this matter out,
 That I essentially am not in madness,
 But mad in craft. 'Twere good you let him know ;
 For who that's but a queen, fair, sober, wise,
 Would from a paddock, from a bat, a gib, 190
 Such dear concernings hide ? who would do so ?
 No, in despite of sense and secrecy,
 Unpeg the basket on the house's top,
 Let the birds fly, and, like the famous ape,
 To try conclusions, in the basket creep, 195
 And break your own neck down.

Queen. Be thou assur'd, if words be made of breath,
 And breath of life, I have no life to breathe
 What thou hast said to me.

Hamlet. I must to England ; you know that ?

Queen. Alack ! 200

I had forgot : 'tis so concluded on.

Hamlet. There's letters seal'd ; and my two schoolfellows,
 Whom I will trust as I will adders fang'd,
 They bear the mandate ; they must sweep my way,
 And marshal me to knavery. Let it work ; 205
 For 'tis the sport to have the engineer
 Hoist with his own petar : and it shall go hard
 But I will delve one yard below their mines,
 And blow them at the moon. O ! 'tis most sweet,
 When in one line two crafts directly meet. 210
 This man shall set me packing ;
 I'll lug the guts into the neighbour room.
 Mother, good-night. Indeed this counsellor
 Is now most still, most secret, and most grave,
 Who was in life a foolish prating knave. 215
 Come, sir, to draw toward an end with you.
 Good-night, mother.

*[Exeunt severally ; HAMLET dragging in the body of
 POLONIUS.]*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the Castle.*

Enter KING, QUEEN, ROSENCRANTZ, and GUILDENSTERN.

King. There's matter in these sighs, these profound heaves :
You must translate : 'tis fit we understand them.
Where is your son ?

Queen. [*To ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*] Bestow
this place on us a little while.

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

Ah ! my good lord, what have I seen to-night. 5

King. What, Gertrude ? How does Hamlet ?

Queen. Mad as the sea and wind, when both contend
Which is the mightier. In his lawless fit,
Behind the arras hearing something stir,
Whips out his rapier, cries, 'A rat ! a rat !' 10
And, in his brainish apprehension, kills
The unseen good old man.

King. O heavy deed !
It had been so with us had we been there.
His liberty is full of threats to all ;
To you yourself, to us, to every one. 15
Alas ! how shall this bloody deed be answer'd ?
It will be laid to us, whose providence
Should have kept short, restrain'd, and out of haunt,
This mad young man : but so much was our love,
We would not understand what was most fit, 20
But, like the owner of a foul disease,
To keep it from divulging, let it feed
Even on the pith of life. Where is he gone ?

Queen. To draw apart the body he hath kill'd ;
O'er whom his very madness, like some ore 25
Among a mineral of metals base,
Shows itself pure : he weeps for what is done.

King. O Gertrude ! come away.
The sun no sooner shall the mountains touch
But we will ship him hence ; and this vile deed 30
We must, with all our majesty and skill,
Both countenance and excuse. Ho ! Guildenstern !

Re-enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Friends both, go join you with some further aid :
Hamlet in madness hath Polonius slain,

And from his mother's closet hath he dragg'd him : 35
Go seek him out : speak fair, and bring the body
Into the chapel. I pray you, haste in this.

[*Exeunt* ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.]

Come, Gertrude, we'll call up our wisest friends ;
And let them know both what we mean to do,
And what's untimely done : so, haply, slander, 40
Whose whisper o'er the world's diameter
As level as the cannon to his blank
Transports his poison'd shot, may miss our name,
And hit the woundless air. O ! come away ;
My soul is full of discord and dismay. [*Exeunt.* 45

SCENE II.—*Another Room in the Same.*

Enter HAMLET

Hamlet. Safely stowed.

Rosencrantz. [*Within.*] Hamlet ! Lord Hamlet !

Guildenstern. [*Within.*] Hamlet !

Hamlet. What noise ! who calls on Hamlet ?
O ! here they come.

Enter ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.

Rosencrantz. What have you done, my lord, with the 5
dead body ?

Hamlet. Compounded it with dust, whereto 'tis kin.

Rosencrantz. Tell us where 'tis, that we may take it
thence

And bear it to the chapel.

Hamlet. Do not believe it.

Rosencrantz. Believe what ? 10

Hamlet. That I can keep your counsel and not mine
own. Besides, to be demanded of a sponge ! what replica-
tion should be made by the son of a king ?

Rosencrantz. Take you me for a sponge, my lord ? 15

Hamlet. Ay, sir, that soaks up the king's countenance,
his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the king
best service in the end : he keeps them, like an ape, in the
corner of his jaw : first mouthed, to be last swallowed : 20
when he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing
you, and, sponge, you shall be dry again.

Rosencrantz. I understand you not, my lord.

Hamlet. I am glad of it : a knavish speech sleeps in 25
a foolish ear.

Rosencrantz. My lord, you must tell us where the body is, and go with us to the king.

Hamlet. The body is with the king, but the king is not with the body. The king is a thing— 30

Guildestern. A thing, my lord!

Hamlet. Of nothing: bring me to him. Hide fox, and all after. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Another Room in the Same.*

Enter KING, attended.

King. I have sent to seek him, and to find the body. How dangerous is it that this man goes loose! Yet must not we put the strong law on him: He's loved of the distracted multitude, Who like not in their judgment, but their eyes; And where 'tis so, the offender's scourge is weigh'd, But never the offence. To bear all smooth and even, This sudden sending him away must seem Deliberate pause: diseases desperate grown By desperate appliance are reliev'd, Or not at all. 10

Enter ROSENCRANTZ.

How now! what hath befall'n?

Rosencrantz. Where the dead body is bestow'd, my lord. We cannot get from him.

King. But where is he?

Rosencrantz. Without, my lord: guarded, to know your pleasure.

King. Bring him before us. 15

Rosencrantz. Ho, Guildenstern! bring in my lord.

Enter HAMLET and GUILDENSTERN.

King. Now, Hamlet, where's Polonius?

Hamlet. At supper.

King. At supper! Where?

Hamlet. Not where he eats, but where he is eaten: a certain convocation of politic worms are e'en at him. Your worm is your only emperor for diet: we fat all creatures else to fat us, and we fat ourselves for maggots: your fat king and your lean beggar is but variable service: two dishes, but to one table: that's the end. 20

King. Alas, alas!

Hamlet. A man may fish with the worm that hath eat of a king, and eat of the fish that hath fed of that worm. 25

King. What dost thou mean by this ?

Hamlet. Nothing, but to show you how a king may go
a progress through the guts of a beggar.

King. Where is Polonius ?

25

Hamlet. In heaven ; send thither to see : if your mes-
senger find him not there, seek him i' the other place your-
self. But, indeed, if you find him not within this month,
you shall nose him as you go up the stairs into the lobby.

40

King. [*To some Attendants.*] Go seek him there.

Hamlet. He will stay till you come.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

King. Hamlet, this deed, for thine especial safety,
Which we do tender, as we dearly grieve
For that which thou hast done, must send thee hence 45
With fiery quickness : therefore prepare thyself ;
The bark is ready, and the wind at help,
The associates tend, and every thing is bent
For England.

Hamlet. For England !

King. Ay, Hamlet.

Hamlet. Good.

King. So is it, if thou knew'st our purposes. 50

Hamlet. I see a cherub that sees them. But, come ;
for England ! Farewell, dear mother.

King. Thy loving father, Hamlet.

Hamlet. My mother : father and mother is man and
wife, man and wife is one flesh, and so, my mother. Come, 55
for England !

[*Exit.*]

King. Follow him at foot ; tempt him with speed aboard :
Delay it not, I'll have him hence to-night.
Away ! for every thing is seal'd and done
That else leans on the affair : pray you, make haste. 60

[*Exeunt ROSENCRANTZ and GUILDENSTERN.*]

And, England, if my love thou hold'st at aught,—
As my great power thereof may give thee sense,
Since yet thy cicatrice looks raw and red
After the Danish sword, and thy free awe
Pays homage to us,—thou may'st not coldly set 65
Our sovereign process, which imports at full,
By letters conjuring to that effect,
The present death of Hamlet. Do it, England ;
For like the hectic in my blood he rages,
And thou must cure me. Till I know 'tis done, 70
Howe'er my haps, my joys were ne'er begun.

[*Exit.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Plain in Denmark.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, a Captain, and Soldiers, marching.

Fortinbras. Go, captain, from me greet the Danish king :
Tell him that, by his licence, Fortinbras
Claims the conveyance of a promis'd march
Over his kingdom. You know the rendezvous.
If that his majesty would aught with us, 5
We shall express our duty in his eye,
And let him know so.

Captain. I will do't, my lord.

Fortinbras. Go softly on.

[*Exeunt FORTINBRAS and Soldiers.*]

Enter HAMLET, ROSENCRANTZ, GUILDENSTERN, &c.

Hamlet. Good sir, whose powers are these ?

Captain. They are of Norway, sir. 10

Hamlet. How purpos'd, sir, I pray you ?

Captain. Against some part of Poland.

Hamlet. Who commands them, sir ?

Captain. The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras.

Hamlet. Goes it against the main of Poland, sir, 15
Or for some frontier ?

Captain. Truly to speak, and with no addition,
We go to gain a little patch of ground
That hath in it no profit but the name.
To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it ; 20
Nor will it yield to Norway or the Pole
A ranker rate, should it be sold in fee.

Hamlet. Why, then the Polack never will defend it.

Captain. Yes, 'tis already garrison'd.

Hamlet. Two thousand souls and twenty thousand ducats
Will not debate the question of this straw : 26
This is the imposthume of much wealth and peace,
That inward breaks, and shows no cause without
Why the man dies. I humbly thank you, sir.

Captain. God be wi' you, sir. [*Exit*

Rosencrantz. Will't please you go, my lord ? 30

Hamlet. I'll be with you straight. Go a little before.

[*Exeunt all except HAMLET.*]

How all occasions do inform against me,
And spur my dull revenge ! What is a man,
If his chief good and market of his time

Be but to sleep and feed ! a beast, no more. 35
 Sure he that made us with such large discourse,
 Looking before and after, gave us not
 That capability and god-like reason
 To fust in us unus'd. Now, whe'r it be
 Bestial oblivion, or some craven scruple 40
 Of thinking too precisely on the event,
 A thought, which, quarter'd, hath but one part wisdom,
 And ever three parts coward, I do not know
 Why yet I live to say 'This thing's to do ;'
 Sith I have cause and will and strength and means 45
 To do't. Examples gross as earth exhort me :
 Witness this army of such mass and charge
 Led by a delicate and tender prince,
 Whose spirit with divine ambition puff'd
 Makes mouths at the invisible event, 50
 Exposing what is mortal and unsure
 To all that fortune, death and danger dare,
 Even for an egg-shell. Rightly to be great
 Is not to stir without great argument,
 But greatly to find quarrel in a straw 55
 When honour's at the stake. How stand I then,
 That have a father kill'd, a mother stain'd,
 Excitements of my reason and my blood,
 And let all sleep, while, to my shame, I see
 The imminent death of twenty thousand men, 60
 That, for a fantasy and trick of fame,
 Go to their graves like beds, fight for a plot
 Whereon the numbers cannot try the cause,
 Which is not tomb enough and continent
 To hide the slain ? O ! from this time forth, 65
 My thoughts be bloody, or be nothing worth ! [Exit.

SCENE V.—*Elsinore. A Room in the Castle.*

Enter QUEEN, HORATIO, and a Gentleman.

Queen. I will not speak with her.

Gentleman. She is importunate, indeed distract :
 Her mood will needs be pitied.

Queen. What would she have ?

Gentleman. She speaks much of her father ; says she hears
 There's tricks i' the world ; and hems, and beats her heart : 5
 Spurns enviously at straws : speaks things in doubt,
 That carry but half sense : her speech is nothing.

Yet the unshaped use of it doth move
 The hearers to collection : they aim at it,
 And botch the words up fit to their own thoughts : 10
 Which, as her winks, and nods, and gestures yield them,
 Indeed would make one think there might be thought,
 Though nothing sure, yet much unhappily.

Horatio. 'Twere good she were spoken with, for she may
 strew

Dangerous conjectures in ill-breeding minds. 15

Queen. Let her come in. [*Exit Gentleman.*]

To my sick soul, as sin's true nature is,
 Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss :
 So full of artless jealousy is guilt,
 It spills itself in fearing to be spilt. 20

Re-enter Gentleman, with OPHELIA.

Ophelia. Where is the beauteous majesty of Denmark ?

Queen. How now, Ophelia !

Ophelia. How should I your true love know
 From another one ?
 By his cockle hat and staff. 25
 And his sandal shoon.

Queen. Alas ! sweet lady, what imports this song ?

Ophelia. Say you ? nay, pray you, mark.

He is dead and gone, lady.
 He is dead and gone : 30
 At his head a grass-green turf ;
 At his heels a stone.

O, ho !

Queen. Nay, but Ophelia,—

Ophelia. Pray you, mark. 35

White his shroud as the mountain snow,—

Enter KING.

Queen. Alas ! look here, my lord.

Ophelia. Larded with sweet flowers :
 Which bewept to the grave did go
 With true-love showers. 40

King. How do you, pretty lady ?

Ophelia. Well, God 'ild you ! They say the owl was
 a baker's daughter. Lord ! we know what we are, but
 know not what we may be. God be at your table ! 45

King. Conceit upon her father.

Ophelia. Pray you, let's have no words of this ; but when they ask you what it means, say you this :

To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day,
All in the morning betime,
And I a maid at your window,
To be your Valentine. 50

King. How long hath she been thus ? 67

Ophelia. I hope all will be well. We must be patient : but I cannot choose but weep, to think they should lay him i' the cold ground. My brother shall know of it : and so I thank you for your good counsel. Come, my coach ! Good-night, ladies ; good-night, sweet ladies ; good-night, good-night. *[Exit.* 70

King. Follow her close ; give her good watch, I pray you. *[Exit HORATIO.* 75

O ! this is the poison of deep grief ; it springs
All from her father's death. O Gertrude, Gertrude !
When sorrows come, they come not single spies,
But in battalions. First, her father slain ;
Next, your son gone ; but he most violent author 80
Of his own just remove : the people muddled,
Thick and unwholesome in their thoughts and whispers.
For good Polonius' death ; and we have done but greenly.
In hugger-mugger to inter him : poor Ophelia
Divided from herself and her fair judgment, 85
Without the which we are pictures, or mere beasts :
Last, and as much containing as all these,
Her brother is in secret come from France,
Feeds on his wonder, keeps himself in clouds,
And wants not buzzers to infect his ear 90
With pestilent speeches of his father's death ;
Wherein necessity, of matter beggar'd,
Will nothing stick our person to arraign
In ear and ear. O my dear Gertrude ! this,
Like to a murdering-piece, in many places 95
Gives me superfluous death. *[A noise within.*

Queen. Alack ! what noise is this ?

Enter a Gentleman.

King. Where are my Switzers ? Let them guard the door. What is the matter ?

Gentleman. Save yourself, my lord ;
The ocean, overpeering of his list,
Eats not the flats with more impetuous haste 100

Than young Laertes, in a riotous head,
 O'erbears your officers. The rabble call him lord ;
 And, as the world were now but to begin,
 Antiquity forgot, custom not known,
 The ratifiers and props of every word, 105
 They cry, 'Choose we ; Laertes shall be king !'
 Caps, hands, and tongues, applaud it to the clouds,
 'Laertes shall be king, Laertes king !'

Queen. How cheerfully on the false trail they cry !
 O ! this is counter, you false Danish dogs ! 110

King. The doors are broke. [*Noise within.*]

Enter LAERTES, armed ; Danes following.

Laertes. Where is the king ? Sirs, stand you all without.

Danes. No, let's come in.

Laertes. I pray you, give me leave.

Danes. We will, we will. [*They retire without the door.*]

Laertes. I thank you : keep the door. O thou vile king ! 115
 Give me my father.

Queen. Calmly, good Laertes.

King. What is the cause, Laertes, 120
 That thy rebellion looks so giant-like ?

Let him go, Gertrude ; do not fear our person :

There's such divinity doth hedge a king,

That treason can but peep to what it would,

Acts little of his will. Tell me, Laertes, 125

Why thou art thus incens'd. Let him go, Gertrude.
 Speak, man.

Laertes. Where is my father ?

King. Dead.

Queen. But not by him.

King. Let him demand his fill.

Laertes. How came he dead ? I'll not be juggled with.
 To hell, allegiance ! vows, to the blackest devil ! 130

Conscience and grace, to the profoundest pit !

I dare damnation. To this point I stand,

That both the worlds I give to negligence,

Let come what comes ; only I'll be reveng'd

Most throughly for my father.

King. Who shall stay you ? 135

Laertes. My will, not all the world :

And, for my means, I'll husband them so well,

They shall go far with little.

King. Good Laertes,

If you desire to know the certainty
Of your dear father's death, is't writ in your revenge, 140
That, swoopstake, you will draw both friend and foe,
Winner and loser ?

Laertes. None but his enemies.

King. Will you know them then ?

Laertes. To his good friends thus wide I'll ope my arms ;
And like the kind life-rendering pelican, 145
Repast them with my blood.

King. Why, now you speak
Like a good child and a true gentleman.
That I am guiltless of your father's death,
And am most sensibly in grief for it,
It shall as level to your judgment pierce 150
As day does to your eye.

Danes. [Within.] Let her come in.

Laertes. How now ! what noise is that ?

Re-enter OPHELIA

O heat, dry up my brains ! tears seven times salt,
Burn out the sense and virtue of mine eye !
By heaven, thy madness shall be paid by weight, 155
Till our scale turn the beam. O rose of May !
Dear maid, kind sister, sweet Ophelia !
O heavens ! is't possible a young maid's wits
Should be as mortal as an old man's life ?
Nature is fine in love, and where 'tis fine 160
It sends some precious instance of itself
After the thing it loves.

Ophelia. They bore him barefac'd on the bier ;
Hey non nonny, nonny, hey nonny ;
And in his grave rain'd many a tear ; 165

Fare you well, my dove !

Laertes. Hadst thou thy wits, and didst persuade revenge,
It could not move thus.

Ophelia. You must sing, a-down a-down,
And you call him a-down-a. 170

O how the wheel becomes it ! It is the false steward that
stole his master's daughter.

Laertes. This nothing's more than matter.

Ophelia. There's rosemary, that's for remembrance ;
pray, love, remember : and there is pansies, that's for 175
thoughts.

Laertes. A document in madness, thoughts and remembrance fitted.

Ophelia. There's fennel for you, and columbines :
there's rue for you ; and here's some for me ; we may call 180
it herb of grace o' Sundays. O ! you may wear your rue
with a difference. There's a daisy ; I would give you some
violets, but they withered all when my father died. They
say he made a good end,— 185

For bonny sweet Robin is all my joy.

Laertes. Thought and affliction, passion, hell itself,
She turns to favour and to prettiness.

Ophelia. And will he not come again ?
And will he not come again ? 190
No, no, he is dead ;
Go to thy death-bed,
He never will come again.
His beard was as white as snow
All flaxen was his poll, 195
He is gone, he is gone,
And we cast away moan :
God ha' mercy on his soul !

And of all Christian souls ! I pray God. God be
wi' ye ! | *Exit.* 200

Laertes. Do you see this, O God !

King. Laertes, I must commune with your grief,
Or you deny me right. Go but apart,
Make choice of whom your wisest friends you will,
And they shall hear and judge 'twixt you and me. 205
If by direct or by collateral hand
They find us touch'd, we will our kingdom give,
Our crown, our life, and all that we call ours,
To you in satisfaction ; but if not,
Be you content to lend your patience to us, 210
And we shall jointly labour with your soul
To give it due content.

Laertes. Let this be so :
His means of death, his obscure burial,
No trophy, sword, nor hatchment o'er his bones,
No noble rite nor formal ostentation, 215
Cry to be heard, as 'twere from heaven to earth,
That I must call't in question.

King. So you shall ;
And where the offence is let the great axe fall.
I pray you go with me. | *Exeunt*

SCENE VI.—*Another Room in the Same.**Enter HORATIO and a Servant.**Horatio.* What are they that would speak with me ?*Servant.* Sailors, sir : they say, they have letters for you.*Horatio.* Let them come in. [*Exit Servant.*]

I do not know from what part of the world

I should be greeted, if not from Lord Hamlet. 5*Enter Sailors.**First Sailor.* God bless you, sir.*Horatio.* Let him bless thee too.*Second Sailor.* He shall, sir, an't please him. There's a letter for you, sir ;—it comes from the ambassador that was bound for England ;—if your name be Horatio, as I am let to know it is. 10*Horatio.* *Horatio, when thou shalt have overlooked this, give these fellows some means to the king : they have letters for him. Ere we were two days old at sea, a pirate of very war-like appointment gave us chase. Finding ourselves too slow of sail, we put on a compelled valour ; in the grapple I boarded them : on the instant they got clear of our ship, so I alone became their prisoner. They have dealt with me like thieves of mercy, but they knew what they did ; I am to do a good turn for them. Let the king have the letters I have sent ; and repair thou to me with as much haste as thou wouldst fly death. I have words to speak in thine ear will make thee dumb ; yet are they much too light for the bore of the matter. These good fellows will bring thee where I am. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England : of them I have much to tell thee. Farewell.* 15
20
25
30*He that thou knowest thine,**HAMLET.*

Come, I will give you way for these your letters ;

And do't the speedier, that you may direct me 35To him from whom you brought them. [*Ereunt.*]SCENE VII.—*Another Room in the Same.**Enter KING and LAERTES.**King.* Now must your conscience my acquittance seal,
And you must put me in your heart for friend,
Sith you have heard, and with a knowing ear.

That he which hath your noble father slain
Pursu'd my life.

Laertes. It well appears : but tell me 5
Why you proceeded not against these feats,
So crimeful and so capital in nature,
As by your safety, wisdom, all things else,
You mainly were stirr'd up.

King. O ! for two special reasons ;
Which may to you, perhaps, seem much unsinew'd, 10
But yet to me they are strong. The queen his mother
Lives almost by his looks, and for myself,—
My virtue or my plague, be it either which,—
She's so conjunctive to my life and soul,
That, as the star moves not but in his sphere, 15
I could not but by her. The other motive,
Why to a public count I might not go,
Is the great love the general gender bear him ;
Who, dipping all his faults in their affection,
Would, like the spring that turneth wood to stone, 20
Convert his gyves to graces ; so that my arrows,
Too slightly timber'd for so loud a wind,
Would have reverted to my bow again,
And not where I had aim'd them.

Laertes. And so have I a noble father lost ; 25
A sister driven into desperate terms,
Whose worth, if praises may go back again,
Stood challenger on mount of all the age
For her perfections. But my revenge will come.

King. Break not your sleeps for that ; you must not 30
think
That we are made of stuff so flat and dull
That we can let our beard be shook with danger
And think it pastime. You shortly shall hear more ;
I lov'd your father, and we love ourself,
And that, I hope, will teach you to imagine,— 35

Enter a Messenger.

How now ! what news ?

Messenger. Letters, my lord, from Hamlet .
This to your majesty ; this to the queen.

King. From Hamlet ! who brought them ?

Messenger. Sailors, my lord, they say ; I saw them not :
They were given me by Claudio, he receiv'd them 40
Of him that brought them.

King. Laertes, you shall hear them.
 Leave us. [Exit Messenger.]

High and mighty, you shall know I am set naked on your kingdom. To-morrow shall I beg leave to see your kingly eyes; when I shall, first asking your pardon thereunto, recount the occasions of my sudden and more strange return. 45
HAMLET.

What should this mean? Are all the rest come back?
 Or is it some abuse and no such thing? 50

Laertes. Know you the hand?

King. 'Tis Hamlet's character. 'Naked,'
 And in a postscript here, he says, 'alone.'
 Can you advise me?

Laertes. I'm lost in it, my lord. But let him come:
 It warms the very sickness in my heart, 55
 That I shall live and tell him to his teeth,
 'Thus diddest thou.'

King. If it be so, Laertes,
 As how should it be so? how otherwise?
 Will you be rul'd by me?

Laertes. Ay, my lord;
 So you will not o'er-rule me to a peace. 60

King. To thine own peace. If he be now return'd,
 As checking at his voyage, and that he means
 No more to undertake it, I will work him
 To an exploit, now ripe in my device,
 Under the which he shall not choose but fall: 65
 And for his death no wind of blame shall breathe,
 But even his mother shall uncharge the practice
 And call it accident.

Laertes. My lord, I will be rul'd;
 The rather, if you could devise it so
 That I might be the organ.

King. It falls right. 70
 You have been talk'd of since your travel much,
 And that in Hamlet's hearing, for a quality
 Wherein, they say, you shine; your sum of parts
 Did not together pluck such envy from him
 As did that one, and that, in my regard, 75
 Of the unworthiest siege.

Laertes. What part is that, my lord?

King. A very riband in the cap of youth,
 Yet needful too; for youth no less becomes
 The light and careless livery that it wears

Than settled age his sables and his weeds, 89
 Importing health and graveness. Two months since
 Here was a gentleman of Normandy :
 I've seen myself, and serv'd against, the French,
 And they can well on horseback : but this gallant
 Had witchcraft in't, he grew unto his seat, 85
 And to such wondrous doing brought his horse,
 As he had been incorps'd and demi-natur'd
 With the brave beast : so far he topp'd my thought,
 That I, in forgery of shapes and tricks,
 Come short of what he did.

Laertes. A Norman was't ? 90

King. A Norman.

Laertes. Upon my life, Lamord.

King. The very same.

Laertes. I know him well : he is the brooch indeed
 And gem of all the nation.

King. He made confession of you, 95
 And gave you such a masterly report
 For art and exercise in your defence,
 And for your rapier most especially,
 That he cried out, 'twould be a sight indeed
 If one could match you : the scrimers of their nation, 100
 He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye,
 If you oppos'd them. Sir, this report of his
 Did Hamlet so envenom with his envy
 That he could nothing do but wish and beg
 Your sudden coming o'er, to play with him. 105
 Now, out of this,—

Laertes. What out of this, my lord ?

King. Laertes, was your father dear to you ?
 Or are you like the painting of a sorrow,
 A face without a heart ?

Laertes. Why ask you this ?

King. Not that I think you did not love your father,
 But that I know love is begun by time, 111
 And that I see, in passages of proof,
 Time qualifies the spark and fire of it.
 There lives within the very flame of love
 A kind of wick or snuff that will abate it, 115
 And nothing is at a like goodness still,
 For goodness, growing to a plurisy,
 Dies in his own too-much. That we would do,
 (We should do when we would, for this 'would' changes,

And hath abatements and delays as many 120
As there are tongues, are hands, are accidents ;
And then this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh,
That hurts by easing. But, to the quick o' the ulcer ;
Hamlet comes back ; what would you undertake
To show yourself your father's son in deed 125
More than in words ?

Laertes. To cut his throat i' the church.

King. No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize ;
Revenge should have no bounds. But, good Laertes,
Will you do this, keep close within your chamber.
Hamlet return'd shall know you are come home ; 130
We'll put on those shall praise your excellence,
And set a double varnish on the fame
The Frenchman gave you, bring you, in fine, together,
And wager on your heads : he, being remiss,
Most generous and free from all contriving, 135
Will not peruse the foils ; so that, with ease
Or with a little shuffling, you may choose
A sword unbated, and, in a pass of practice
Requite him for your father.

Laertes. I will do't ;
And, for that purpose, I'll anoint my sword. 140
I bought an unction of a mountebank,
So mortal that, but dip a knife in it,
Where it draws blood no cataplasm so rare,
Collected from all simples that have virtue
Under the moon, can save the thing from death 145
That is but scratch'd withal ; I'll touch my point
With this contagion, that, if I gall him slightly,
It may be death.

King. Let's further think of this ;
Weigh what convenience both of time and means
May fit us to our shape. If this should fail, 150
And that our drift look through our bad performance
'Twere better not assay'd ; therefore this project
Should have a back or second, that might hold,
If this should blast in proof. Soft ! let me see :
We'll make a solemn wager on your cunnings : 155
I ha't :

When in your motion you are hot and dry,—
As make your bouts more violent to that end,—
And that he calls for drink, I'll have prepar'd him
A chalice for the nonce, whereon but sipping, 160

If he by chance escape your venom'd stuck,
Our purpose may hold there. But stay! what noise?

Enter QUEEN.

How now, sweet queen!

Queen. One woe doth tread upon another's heel,
So fast they follow: your sister's drown'd, Laertes. 165

Laertes. Drown'd! O, where?

Queen. There is a willow grows aslant a brook,
That shows his hoar leaves in the glassy stream;
There with fantastic garlands did she come,
Of crow-flowers, nettles, daisies, and long purples, 170
That liberal shepherds give a grosser name,
But our cold maids do dead men's fingers call them:
There, on the pendent boughs her coronet weeds
Clambering to hang, an envious sliver broke,
When down her weedy trophies and herself 175
Fell in the weeping brook. Her clothes spread wide,
And, mermaid-like, awhile they bore her up;
Which time she chanted snatches of old tunes,
As one incapable of her own distress,
Or like a creature native and indu'd 180
Unto that element; but long it could not be
Till that her garments, heavy with their drink,
Pull'd the poor wretch from her melodious lay
To muddy death.

Laertes. Alas! then, she is drown'd?

Queen. Drown'd, drown'd. 185

Laertes. Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia,
And therefore I forbid my tears; but yet
It is our trick, nature her custom holds,
Let shame say what it will; when these are gone
The woman will be out. Adieu, my lord! 190
I have a speech of fire, that fain would blaze,
But that this folly douts it. [*Exit.*]

King. Let's follow, Gertrude.
How much I had to do to calm his rage!
Now fear I this will give it start again;
Therefore let's follow. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A Churchyard.*

Enter two Clowns, with spades and mattock.

First Clown. Is she to be buried in Christian burial that wilfully seeks her own salvation ?

Second Clown. I tell thee she is ; and therefore make her grave straight : the crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial. 5

First Clown. How can that be, unless she drowned herself in her own defence ?

Second Clown. Why, 'tis found so.

First Clown. It must be *se offendendo* ; it cannot be else. For here lies the point : if I drown myself wittingly it argues an act ; and an act hath three branches ; it is, to act, to do, and to perform : argal, she drowned herself wittingly. 10

Second Clown. Nay, but hear you, goodman delver,—

First Clown. Give me leave. Here lies the water ; good : here stands the man ; good : if the man go to this water, and drown himself, it is, will he, nill he, he goes ; mark you that ? but if the water come to him, and drown him, he drowns not himself : argal, he that is not guilty of his own death shortens not his own life. 20

Second Clown. But is this law ?

First Clown. Ay, marry, is't ; crowner's quest law.

Second Clown. Will you ha' the truth on't ? If this had not been a gentlewoman she should have been buried out o' Christian burial. 25

First Clown. Why, there thou sayest ; and the more pity that great folk should have countenance in this world to drown or hang themselves more than their even Christian. Come, my spade. There is no ancient gentlemen but gardeners, ditchers, and grave-makers ; they hold up Adam's profession. 30

Second Clown. Was he a gentleman ? 35

First Clown. A' was the first that ever bore arms.

Second Clown. Why, he had none.

First Clown. What ! art a heathen ? How dost thou understand the Scripture ? The Scripture says, Adam digged ; could he dig without arms ? I'll put another question to thee ; if thou answerest me not to the purpose, confess thyself— 40

Second Clown. Go to.

First Clown. What is he that builds stronger than either
the mason, the shipwright, or the carpenter ? 15

Second Clown. The gallows-maker ; for that frame
outlives a thousand tenants.

First Clown. I like thy wit well, in good faith ; the
gallows does well, but how does it well ? it does well to 50
those that do ill ; now thou dost ill to say the gallows
is built stronger than the church : argal, the gallows may
do well to thee. To't again ; come.

Second Clown. Who builds stronger than a mason, 55
a shipwright, or a carpenter ?

First Clown. Ay, tell me that, and unyoke.

Second Clown. Marry, now I can tell.

First Clown. To't.

Second Clown. Mass, I cannot tell. 60

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO at a distance.

First Clown. Cudgel thy brains no more about it, for
your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating ; and,
when you are asked this question next, say, ' a grave-
maker : ' the houses that he makes last till doomsday. 65
Go, get thee to Yaughan ; fetch me a stoup of liquor.

[*Exit Second Clown.*]

First Clown digs, and sings.

In youth, when I did love, did love,

Methought it was very sweet,

To contract, O ! the time, for-a my behove,

O ! methought there was nothing meet. 70

Hamlet. Has this fellow no feeling of his business,
that he sings at grave-making ?

Horatio. Custom hath made it in him a property of
easiness.

Hamlet. 'Tis e'en so ; the hand of little employment 75
hath the daintier sense.

First Clown.

But age, with his stealing steps,

Hath claw'd me in his clutch,

And hath shipped me intil the land.

As if I had never been such. 80

[*Throws up a skull.*]

Hamlet. That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing
once ; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were
Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder ! This might be

the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-offices, one 85
that would circumvent God, might it not ?

Horatio. It might, my lord.

Hamlet. Or of a courtier, which could say, ' Good 90
morrow, sweet lord ! How dost thou, good lord ! ' This
might be my Lord Such-a-one, that praised my Lord
Such-a-one's horse, when he meant to beg it, might it not ?

Horatio. Ay, my lord.

Hamlet. Why, e'en so, and now my Lady Worm's ; 95
chapless, and knocked about the mazzard with a sexton's
spade. Here's fine revolution, an we had the trick to see't.
Did these bones cost no more the breeding but to play at
loggats with 'em ? mine ache to think on't.

First Clown.

A pick-axe, and a spade, a spade, 100

For and a shrouding sheet ;

O ! a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

[Throws up another skull.]

Hamlet. There's another ; why may not that be the 105
skull of a lawyer ? Where be his quiddities now, his
quilllets, his cases, his tenures, and his tricks ? why does
he suffer this rude knave now to knock him about the
sconce with a dirty shovel, and will not tell him of his
action of battery ? Hum ! This fellow might be in's time 110
a great buyer of land, with his statutes, his recognizances,
his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries ; is this the
fine of his fines, and the recovery of his recoveries, to have
his fine pate full of fine dirt ? will his vouchers vouch him 115
no more of his purchases, and double ones too, than the
length and breadth of a pair of indentures ? The very
conveyance of his lands will hardly lie in this box, and
must the inheritor himself have no more, ha ? 120

Horatio. Not a jot more, my lord.

Hamlet. Is not parchment made of sheep-skins ?

Horatio. Ay, my lord, and of calf-skins too.

Hamlet. They are sheep and calves which seek out 125
assurance in that. I will speak to this fellow. Whose
grave's this, sir ?

First Clown. Mine, sir,

O ! a pit of clay for to be made

For such a guest is meet.

Hamlet. I think it be thine, indeed ; for thou liest in't. 130

First Clown. You lie out on't, sir, and therefore it is not yours ; for my part, I do not lie in't, and yet it is mine.

Hamlet. Thou dost lie in't, to be in't and say it is thine : 'tis for the dead, not for the quick ; therefore thou liest. 135

First Clown. 'Tis a quick lie, sir : 'twill away again, from me to you.

Hamlet. What man dost thou dig it for ? 140

First Clown. For no man, sir.

Hamlet. What woman, then ?

First Clown. For none, neither.

Hamlet. Who is to be buried in't ?

First Clown. One that was a woman, sir ; but, rest her soul, she's dead. 145

Hamlet. How absolute the knave is ! we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us. By the Lord, Horatio, these three years I have taken note of it ; the age is grown so picked that the toe of the peasant comes so near the heel of the courtier, he galls his kibe. How long hast thou been a grave-maker ? 150

First Clown. Of all the days i' the year, I came to't that day that our last King Hamlet overcame Fortinbras. 155

Hamlet. How long is that since ? *21 1/2 years*

First Clown. Cannot you tell that ? every fool can tell that : it was the very day that young Hamlet was born : he that is mad, and sent into England. 160

Hamlet. Ay, marry ; why was he sent into England ?

First Clown. Why, because he was mad : he shall recover his wits there ; or, if he do not, 'tis no great matter there. 165

Hamlet. Why ?

First Clown. 'Twill not be seen in him there ; there the men are as mad as he.

Hamlet. How came he mad ? 170

First Clown. Very strangely, they say.

Hamlet. How strangely ?

First Clown. Faith, e'en with losing his wits.

Hamlet. Upon what ground ?

First Clown. Why, here in Denmark ; I have been sexton here, man and boy, thirty years. 175

Hamlet. How long will a man lie i' the earth ere he rot ?

First Clown. Faith, if he be not rotten before he die, he will last you some eight year or nine year ; a tanner will last you nine year. *2* 179

Hamlet. Why he more than another ?

First Clown. Why, sir, his hide is so tanned with his trade that he will keep out water a great while, and your water is a sore decayer of your dead body. Here's a skull now ; this skull hath lain you i' the earth three-and-twenty years. 185

Hamlet. Whose was it ? 190

First Clown. A mad fellow's it was : whose do you think it was ?

Hamlet. Nay, I know not.

First Clown. A pestilence on him for a mad rogue : a' poured a flagon of Rhenish on my head once. This same skull, sir, was Yorick's skull, the king's jester. 195

Hamlet. This !

First Clown. E'en that. 200

Hamlet. Let me see.—[*Takes the skull.*—Alas ! poor Yorick. I knew him, Horatio ; a fellow of infinite jest, of most excellent fancy ; he hath borne me on his back a thousand times ; and now, how abhorred in my imagination it is ! my gorge rises at it. Here hung those lips that I have kissed I know not how oft. Where be your gibes now ? your gambols ? your songs ? your flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table on a roar ? Not one now, to mock your own grinning ! quite chapfallen ! Now get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favour she must come ; make her laugh at that. Prithee, Horatio, tell me one thing. 205 210 215

Horatio. What's that, my lord ?

Hamlet. Dost thou think Alexander looked o' this fashion i' the earth ?

Horatio. E'en so.

Hamlet. And smelt so ? pah ! [Puts down the skull. 220

Horatio. E'en so, my lord.

Hamlet. To what base uses we may return, Horatio ! Why may not imagination trace the noble dust of Alexander, till he find it stopping a bung-hole ? 225

Horatio. 'Twere to consider too curiously, to consider so.

Hamlet. No, faith, not a jot : but to follow him thither with modesty enough, and likelihood to lead it ; as thus : Alexander died, Alexander was buried. Alexander returneth into dust ; the dust is earth ; of earth we make loam, and why of that loam, whereto he was converted, might they not stop a beer-barrel ? 230

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay, 235
 Might stop a hole to keep the wind away :
 O ! that that earth, which kept the world in awe,
 Should patch a wall to expel the winter's flaw.

But soft ! but soft ! aside : here comes the king.

*Enter Priests, &c., in procession : the Corpse of OPHELIA,
 LAERTES and Mourners following ; KING, QUEEN, their
 Trains, &c.*

The queen, the courtiers : who is that they follow ? 240
 And with such maimed rites ? This doth betoken
 The corse they follow did with desperate hand
 Fordo its own life ; 'twas of some estate.
 Cough we awhile, and mark. [*Retiring with HORATIO.*

Laertes. What ceremony else ?

Hamlet. That is Laertes, 245

A very noble youth : mark.

Laertes. What ceremony else ?

First Priest. Her obsequies have been as far enlarg'd
 As we have warrantise : her death was doubtful,
 And, but that great command o'ersways the order, 250
 She should in ground unsanctified have lodg'd
 Till the last trumpet : for charitable prayers,
 Shards, flints, and pebbles should be thrown on her ;
 Yet here she is allow'd her virgin crants, 255
 Her maiden strewments, and the bringing home
 Of bell and burial.

Laertes. Must there no more be done ?

First Priest. No more be done :

We should profane the service of the dead,
 To sing a requiem, and such rest to her
 As to peace-parted souls.

Laertes. Lay her i' the earth ; 260
 And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
 May violets spring ! I tell thee, churlish priest,
 A ministering angel shall my sister be,
 When thou liest howling.

Hamlet. What ! the fair Ophelia ?

Queen. Sweets to the sweet : farewell ! [*Scattering flowers.*
 I hop'd thou shouldst have been my Hamlet's wife ; 265
 I thought thy bride-bed to have deck'd, sweet maid,
 And not have strew'd thy grave.

Laertes. O ! treble woe
 Fall ten times treble on that cursed head

Whose wicked deed thy most ingenious sense
Depriv'd thee of. Hold off the earth awhile,
Till I have caught her once more in mine arms. 270

[*Leaps into the grave.*]

Now pile your dust upon the quick and dead,
Till of this flat a mountain you have made,
To o'er-top old Pelion or the skyish head 275
Of blue Olympus.

Hamlet. [*Advancing.*] What is he whose grief
Bears such an emphasis? whose phrase of sorrow
Conjures the wandering stars, and makes them stand
Like wonder-wounded hearers? this is I,
Hamlet the Dane.

[*Leaps into the grave.*]

Laertes. The devil take thy soul! 280

[*Grapples with him.*]

Hamlet. Thou pray'st not well.
I prithee, take thy fingers from my throat;
For though I am not splenetic and rash
Yet have I in me something dangerous,
Which let thy wisdom fear. Away thy hand! 285

King. Pluck them asunder.

Queen. Hamlet! Hamlet!

All. Gentlemen,—

Horatio. Good my lord, be quiet.

[*The Attendants part them, and they come out of the grave.*]

Hamlet. Why, I will fight with him upon this theme
Until my eyelids will no longer wag.

Queen. O my son! what theme? 290

Hamlet. I lov'd Ophelia: forty thousand brothers
Could not, with all their quantity of love,
Make up my sum. What wilt thou do for her?

King. O! he is mad, Laertes.

Queen. For love of God, forbear him. 295

Hamlet. 'Swounds, show me what thou'lt do:
Woo't weep? woo't fight? woo't fast? woo't tear thyself?
Woo't drink up eisel? eat a crocodile?

I'll do't. Dost thou come here to whine?
To outface me with leaping in her grave? 300

Be buried quick with her, and so will I:
And, if thou prate of mountains, let them throw
Millions of acres on us, till our ground,
Singeing his pate against the burning zone,
Make Ossa like a wart! Nay, an thou'lt mouth, 305
I'll rant as well as thou.

Queen. This is mere madness :
 And thus a while the fit will work on him :
 Anon, as patient as the female dove,
 When that her golden couplets are disclos'd,
 His silence will sit drooping.

Hamlet. Hear you, sir : 310
 What is the reason that you use me thus ?
 I lov'd you ever : but it is no matter ;
 Let Hercules himself do what he may,
 The cat will mew and dog will have his day. [*Exit.*

King. I pray you, good Horatio, wait upon him. 315
 [*Exit* HORATIO.
 [*To* LAERTES.] Strengthen your patience in our last night's
 speech :

We'll put the matter to the present push.
 Good Gertrude, set some watch over your son.
 This grave shall have a living monument :
 An hour of quiet shortly shall we see ; 320
 Till then, in patience our proceeding be. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—A Hall in the Castle.

Enter HAMLET and HORATIO.

Hamlet. So much for this, sir : now shall you see the other :
 You do remember all the circumstance ?

Horatio. Remember it, my lord ?

Hamlet. Sir, in my heart there was a kind of fighting
 That would not let me sleep ; methought I lay 5
 Worse than the mutines in the bilboes. Rashly,—
 And prais'd be rashness for it, let us know,
 Our indiscretion sometimes serves us well
 When our deep plots do pall ; and that should teach us
 There's a divinity that shapes our ends, 10
 Rough-hew them how we will.

Horatio. That is most certain.

Hamlet. Up from my cabin,
 My sea-gown scarf'd about me, in the dark
 Grop'd I to find out them, had my desire,
 Finger'd their packet, and in fine withdrew 15
 To mine own room again : making so bold—
 My fears forgetting manners—to unseal
 Their grand commission ; where I found, Horatio,
 O royal knavery ! an exact command,
 Larded with many several sorts of reasons 20

Importing Denmark's health, and England's too,
 With, ho ! such bugs and goblins in my life,
 That, on the supervise, no leisure bated,
 No, not to stay the grinding of the axe,
 My head should be struck off.

Horatio. Is't possible ? 25

Hamlet. Here's the commission : read it at more leisure.
 But wilt thou hear me how I did proceed ?

Horatio. I beseech you.

Hamlet. Being thus be-netted round with villanies,—
 Ere I could make a prologue to my brains 30
 They had begun the play,—I sat me down,
 Devis'd a new commission, wrote it fair ;
 I once did hold it, as our statist's do,
 A baseness to write fair, and labour'd much
 How to forget that learning ; but, sir, now 35
 It did me yeoman's service. Wilt thou know
 The effect of what I wrote ?

Horatio. Ay, good my lord.

Hamlet. An earnest conjuration from the king,
 As England was his faithful tributary,
 As love between them like the palm should flourish, 40
 As peace should still her wheaten garland wear,
 And stand a comma 'tween their amities,
 And many such-like 'As'es of great charge,
 That, on the view and knowing of these contents,
 Without debatement further, more or less, 45
 He should the bearers put to sudden death,
 Not shriving-time allow'd.

Horatio. How was this seal'd ?

Hamlet. Why, even in that was heaven ordinant.
 I had my father's signet in my purse,
 Which was the model of that Danish seal ; 50
 Folded the writ up in form of the other,
 Subscrib'd it, gave't th' impression, plac'd it safely,
 The changeling never known. Now, the next day
 Was our sea-fight, and what to this was sequent
 Thou know'st already. 55

Horatio. So Guildenstern and Rosencrantz go to't.

Hamlet. Why, man, they did make love to this employ-
 ment ;
 They are not near my conscience ; their defeat
 Does by their own insinuation grow.
 'Tis dangerous when the baser nature comes 60

Between the pass and fell-incensed points
Of mighty opposites.

Horatio. Why, what a king is this ?

Hamlet. Does it not, thinks't thee, stand me now upon—
He that hath kill'd my king and wiv'd my mother,
Popp'd in between the election and my hopes, 65
Thrown out his angle for my proper life,
And with such cozenage—is't not perfect conscience
To quit him with this arm ? and is't not to be damn'd
To let this canker of our nature come
In further evil ? 70

Horatio. It must be shortly known to him from England
What is the issue of the business there.

Hamlet. It will be short : the interim is mine ;
And a man's life's no more than to say ' One.'
But I am very sorry, good Horatio, 75
That to Laertes I forgot myself ;
For, by the image of my cause, I see
The portraiture of his : I'll count his favours :
But, sure, the bravery of his grief did put me
Into a towering passion.

Horatio. Peace ! who comes here ? 80

Enter OSRIC.

Osric. Your lordship is right welcome back to Denmark.

Hamlet. I humbly thank you, sir. [*Aside to HORATIO.*]
Dost know this water-fly ?

Horatio. [*Aside to HAMLET.*] No, my good lord. 85

Hamlet. [*Aside to HORATIO.*] Thy state is the more
gracious ; for 'tis a vice to know him. He hath much
land, and fertile : let a beast be lord of beasts, and his
crib shall stand at the king's mess : 'tis a chough ; but, as 90
I say, spacious in the possession of dirt.

Osric. Sweet lord, if your lordship were at leisure,
I should impart a thing to you from his majesty.

Hamlet. I will receive it, sir, with all diligence of 95
spirit. Your bonnet to his right use ; 'tis for the head.

Osric. I thank your lordship, 'tis very hot.

Hamlet. No, believe me, 'tis very cold ; the wind is 100
northerly.

Osric. It is indifferent cold, my lord, indeed,

Hamlet. But yet methinks it is very sultry and hot for
my complexion.

Osric. Exceedingly, my lord : it is very sultry, as 'twere, 125
I cannot tell how. But, my lord, his majesty bade me
signify to you that he has laid a great wager on your head.
Sir, this is the matter,—

Hamlet. I beseech you, remember—

[*HAMLET moves him to put on his hat.*]

Osric. Nay, good my lord : for mine ease, in good 110
faith. Sir, here is newly come to court Laertes ; believe
me, an absolute gentleman, full of most excellent differ-
ences, of very soft society and great showing ; indeed, to
speak feelingly of him, he is the card or calendar of gentry,
for you shall find in him the continent of what part a 115
gentleman would see.

Hamlet. Sir, his definement suffers no perdition in
you : though, I know, to divide him inventorially would
dizzy the arithmetic of memory, and yet but yaw neither, 120
in respect of his quick sail. But, in the verity of extolment,
I take him to be a soul of great article ; and his infusion of
such dearth and rareness, as, to make true diction of him,
his semblable is his mirror ; and who else would trace 125
him, his umbrage, nothing more.

Osric. Your lordship speaks most infallibly of him.

Hamlet. The concernancy, sir ? why do we wrap the
gentleman in our more rawer breath ? 130

Osric. Sir ?

Horatio. Is't not possible to understand in another
tongue ? You will do't, sir, really.

Hamlet. What imports the nomination of this gentle- 135
man ?

Osric. Of Laertes ?

Horatio. His purse is empty already : all's golden words
are spent.

Hamlet. Of him, sir.

Osric. I know you are not ignorant— 140

Hamlet. I would you did, sir : in faith, if you did, it
would not much approve me. Well, sir.

Osric. You are not ignorant of what excellence Laertes
is—

Hamlet. I dare not confess that, lest I should compare 145
with him in excellence ; but, to know a man well, were to
know himself.

Osric. I mean, sir, for his weapon : but, in the imputa-
tion laid on him by them, in his meed he's unfellowed. 150

Hamlet. What's his weapon ?

Osric. Rapier and dagger.

Hamlet. That's two of his weapons ; but, well.

Osric. The king, sir, hath wagered with him six Barbary 155
horses ; against the which he has imponed, as I take it,
six French rapiers and poniards, with their assigns, as
girdle, hangers, and so : three of the carriages, in faith,
are very dear to fancy, very responsive to the hilts, most 160
delicate carriages, and of very liberal conceit.

Hamlet. What call you the carriages ?

Horatio. I knew you must be edified by the margent,
ere you had done.

Osric. The carriages, sir, are the hangers.

Hamlet. The phrase would be more german to the 165
matter, if we could carry cannon by our sides ; I would
it might be hangers till then. But, on : six Barbary
horses against six French swords, their assigns, and three
liberal-conceited carriages ; that's the French bet against 170
the Danish. Why is this 'imponed,' as you call it ?

Osric. The king, sir, hath laid, that in a dozen passes
between yourself and him, he shall not exceed you three 175
hits ; he hath laid on twelve for nine, and it would come
to immediate trial, if your lordship would vouchsafe the
answer.

Hamlet. How if I answer no ?

Osric. I mean, my lord, the opposition of your person
in trial.

Hamlet. Sir, I will walk here in the hall ; if it please 180
his majesty, 'tis the breathing time of day with me : let
the foils be brought, the gentleman willing, and the king
hold his purpose, I will win for him an I can ; if not, I will
gain nothing but my shame and the odd hits. 185

Osric. Shall I re-deliver you so ?

Hamlet. To this effect, sir ; after what flourish your
nature will.

Osric. I commend my duty to your lordship.

Hamlet. Yours, yours. [*Exit OSRIC.*] He does well to 190
commend it himself ; there are no tongues else for's turn.

Horatio. This lapwing runs away with the shell on his
head.

Hamlet. He did comply with his dug before he sucked 195
it. Thus has he—and many more of the same bevy, that
I know the drossy age dotes on—only got the tune of the
time and outward habit of encounter, a kind of yesty
collection which carries them through and through the 200

most fond and winnowed opinions ; and do but blow them to their trial, the bubbles are out.

Enter a Lord.

Lord. My lord, his majesty commended him to you by young Osric, who brings back to him, that you attend him in the hall : he sends to know if your pleasure hold to play with Laertes, or that you will take longer time. 205

Hamlet. I am constant to my purposes ; they follow the king's pleasure : if his fitness speaks, mine is ready ; now, or whensoever, provided I be so able as now. 210

Lord. The king, and queen, and all are coming down.

Hamlet. In happy time.

Lord. The queen desires you to use some gentle entertainment to Laertes before you fall to play. 215

Hamlet. She well instructs me. *[Exit Lord.]*

Horatio. You will lose this wager, my lord.

Hamlet. I do not think so ; since he went into France, I have been in continual practice ; I shall win at the odds. But thou wouldst not think how ill all's here about my heart ; but it is no matter. 220

Horatio. Nay, good my lord,— 225

Hamlet. It is but foolery ; but it is such a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.

Horatio. If your mind dislike any thing, obey it ; I will forestal their repair hither, and say you are not fit. 230

Hamlet. Not a whit, we defy augury ; there's a special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come ; if it be not to come, it will be now ; if it be not now, yet it will come : the readiness is all. Since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes ? Let be. 235

Enter KING, QUEEN, LAERTES, Lords, OSRIC, and Attendants with foils, &c.

King. Come, Hamlet, come, and take this hand from me.

[The KING puts the hand of LAERTES into that of HAMLET.]

Hamlet. Give me your pardon, sir ; I've done you wrong ; But pardon't, as you are a gentleman. 241

This presence knows,

And you must needs have heard, how I am punish'd

With sore distraction. What I have done,

That might your nature, honour and exception 245

Roughly awake, I here proclaim was madness.

Was't Hamlet wrong'd Laertes ? Never Hamlet
 If Hamlet from himself be ta'en away,
 And when he's not himself does wrong Laertes,
 Then Hamlet does it not ; Hamlet denies it. 250
 Who does it then ? His madness. If't be so,
 Hamlet is of the faction that is wrong'd ;
 His madness is poor Hamlet's enemy.

Sir, in this audience,
 Let my disclaiming from a purpos'd evil 255
 Free me so far in your most generous thoughts,
 That I have shot mine arrow o'er the house,
 And hurt my brother.

Laertes. I am satisfied in nature,
 Whose motive, in this case, should stir me most
 To my revenge ; but in my terms of honour 260
 I stand aloof, and will no reconciliation,
 Till by some elder masters, of known honour,
 I have a voice and precedent of peace,
 To keep my name ungor'd. But till that time,
 I do receive your offer'd love like love, 265
 And will not wrong it.

Hamlet. I embrace it freely ;
 And will this brother's wager frankly play.
 Give us the foils. Come on.

Laertes. Come, one for me.

Hamlet. I'll be your foil, Laertes ; in mine ignorance
 Your skill shall, like a star i' the darkest night, 270
 Stick fiery off indeed.

Laertes. You mock me, sir.

Hamlet. No, by this hand.

King. Give them the foils, young Osric. Cousin Hamlet.
 You know the wager ?

Hamlet. Very well, my lord ;
 Your Grace hath laid the odds o' the weaker side. 275

King. I do not fear it ; I have seen you both ;
 But since he is better'd, we have therefore odds.

Laertes. This is too heavy ; let me see another.

Hamlet. This likes me well. These foils have all a length ?

Osric. Ay, my good lord. [*They prepare to play*]

King. Set me the stoups of wine upon that table. 281
 If Hamlet give the first or second hit,
 Or quit in answer of the third exchange,
 Let all the battlements their ordnance fire ;
 The king shall drink to Hamlet's better breath ; 285

And in the cup an union shall he throw,
 Richer than that which four successive kings
 In Denmark's crown have worn. Give me the cups ;
 And let the kettle to the trumpet speak,
 The trumpet to the cannoneer without, 290
 The cannons to the heavens, the heavens to earth,
 'Now the king drinks to Hamlet !' Come, begin ;
 And you, the judges, bear a wary eye.

Hamlet. Come on, sir.

Laertes. Come, my lord. [*They play.*

Hamlet. One.

Laertes. No.

Hamlet. Judgment.

Osric. A hit, a very palpable hit.

Laertes. Well : again. 295

King. Stay ; give me drink. Hamlet, this pearl is thine ;
 Here's to thy health. Give him the cup.

[*Trumpets sound ; and cannon shot off within.*

Hamlet. I'll play this bout first ; set it by awhile.

Come.—[*They play.*] Another hit : what say you ?

Laertes. A touch, a touch, I do confess. 300

King. Our son shall win.

Queen. He's fat, and scant of breath.

Here, Hamlet, take my napkin, rub thy brows ;

The queen carouses to thy fortune, Hamlet.

Hamlet. Good madam !

King. Gertrude, do not drink.

Queen. I will, my lord ; I pray you, pardon me. 305

King. [*Aside.*] It is the poison'd cup ! it is too late.

Hamlet. I dare not drink yet, madam ; by and by.

Queen. Come, let me wipe thy face.

Laertes. My lord, I'll hit him now.

King. I do not think't.

Laertes. [*Aside.*] And yet 'tis almost 'gainst my conscience.

Hamlet. Come, for the third, Laertes. You but dally ; 311
 I pray you, pass with your best violence.

I am afeard you make a wanton of me.

Laertes. Say you so ? come on. [*They play.*

Osric. Nothing, neither way. 315

Laertes. Have at you now.

[*LAERTES wounds HAMLET : then, in scuffling, they
 change rapiers, and HAMLET wounds LAERTES.*

King. Part them ! they are incens'd.

Hamlet. Nay, come, again. [*The QUEEN falls.*

Osriv. Look to the queen there, ho !

Horatio. They bleed on both sides. How is it, my lord ?

Osriv. How is it, Laertes ?

Laertes. Why, as a woodcock to mine own springe, Osriv ;
I am justly kill'd with mine own treachery. 321

Hamlet. How does the queen ?

King. She swoonds to see them bleed.

Queen. No, no, the drink, the drink,—O my dear Hamlet !
The drink, the drink ; I am poison'd. [*Dies.*

Hamlet. O villany ! Ho ! let the door be lock'd : 325
Treachery ! seek it out. [*LAERTES falls.*

Laertes. It is here, Hamlet. Hamlet, thou art slain ;
No medicine in the world can do thee good ;
In thee there is not half an hour of life ;
The treacherous instrument is in thy hand, 330
Unbated and envenom'd. The foul practice
Hath turn'd itself on me ; lo ! here I lie,
Never to rise again. Thy mother's poison'd.
I can no more. The king, the king's to blame.

Hamlet. The point envenom'd too !— 335
Then, venom, to thy work. [*Stabs the KING.*

All. Treason ! treason !

King. O : yet defend me, friends ; I am but hurt.

Hamlet. Here, thou licentious, murderous, damned Dane,
Drink off this potion :—is thy union here ? 340
Follow my mother. [*KING dies.*

Laertes. He is justly serv'd ;
It is a poison temper'd by himself.
Exchange forgiveness with me, noble Hamlet :
Mine and my father's death come not upon thee,
Nor thine on me ! [*Dies.*

Hamlet. Heaven make thee free of it ! I follow thee. 346
I am dead, Horatio. Wretched queen, adieu !
You that look pale and tremble at this chance,
That are but mutes or audience to this act,
Had I but time,—as this fell sergeant, death, 350
Is strict in his arrest,—O ! I could tell you—
But let it be. Horatio, I am dead ;
Thou liv'st ; report me and my cause aright
To the unsatisfied.

Horatio. Never believe it ;
I am more an antique Roman than a Dane : 355
Here's yet some liquor left.

Hamlet. As thou'rt a man,

Give me the cup : let go : by heaven, I'll have't.
 O God ! Horatio, what a wounded name,
 Things standing thus unknown, shall live behind me.
 If thou didst ever hold me in thy heart, 360
 Absent thee from felicity awhile,
 And in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain.
 To tell my story [*March afar off, and shot within.*
 What war-like noise is this ?

Osric. Young Fortinbras, with conquest come from Poland,
 To the ambassadors of England gives 365
 This war-like volley.

Hamlet. O ! I die, Horatio ;
 The potent poison quite o'er-crows my spirit :
 I cannot live to hear the news from England,
 But I do prophesy the election lights
 On Fortinbras : he has my dying voice ; 370
 So tell him, with the occurrents, more and less,
 Which have solicited—The rest is silence. [*Dies.*

Horatio. Now cracks a noble heart. Good-night, sweet
 prince,
 And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest !
 Why does the drum come hither ? [*March within.*

Enter FORTINBRAS, the English Ambassadors, and Others.

Fortinbras. Where is this sight ?

Horatio. What is it ye would see ?
 If aught of woe or wonder, cease your search.

Fortinbras. This quarry cries on havoc. O proud death !
 What feast is toward in thine eternal cell,
 That thou so many princes at a shot 380
 So bloodily hast struck ?

First Ambassador. The sight is dismal ;
 And our affairs from England come too late :
 The ears are senseless that should give us hearing,
 To tell him his commandment is fulfill'd,
 That Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are dead. 385
 Where should we have our thanks ?

Horatio. Not from his mouth,
 Had it the ability of life to thank you :
 He never gave commandment for their death.
 But since, so jump upon this bloody question,
 You from the Polack wars, and you from England, 390
 Are here arriv'd, give order that these bodies
 High on a stage be placed to the view ;

And let me speak to the yet unknowing world
How these things came about : so shall you hear
Of carnal, bloody, and unnatural acts, 395
Of accidental judgments, casual slaughters ;
Of deaths put on by cunning and forc'd cause,
And, in this upshot, purposes mistook
Fall'n on the inventors' heads ; all this can I
Truly deliver.

Fortinbras. Let us haste to hear it, 400
And call the noblest to the audience.
For me, with sorrow I embrace my fortune ;
I have some rights of memory in this kingdom,
Which now to claim my vantage doth invite me.

Horatio. Of that I shall have also cause to speak, 405
And from his mouth whose voice will draw on more :
But let this same be presently perform'd,
Even while men's minds are wild, lest more mischance
On plots and errors happen.

Fortinbras. Let four captains 410
Bear Hamlet, like a soldier, to the stage ;
For he was likely, had he been put on,
To have prov'd most royally : and, for his passage,
The soldiers' music and the rites of war
Speak loudly for him.
Take up the bodies : such a sight as this 415
Becomes the field, but here shows much amiss.
Go, bid the soldiers shoot.

[*A dead march. Exeunt, bearing off the bodies ; after
which a peal of ordnance is shot off.*]

NOTES

N.E.D. = *New English Dictionary.*

ACT I, SCENE I. 2. *me* is emphatic.

3. *Long live the king!* This is the watchword.

13. *rivals*, partners : its earlier sense. 'Rivales' meant at first those who lived by the same 'rivus' or stream, and went shares in its water. Because of the natural disputes that followed, it came to mean what it means now. 'Rivality' = partnership occurs in *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. v. 8.

15. *the Dane*, the king of the Danes.

16. *Give you good-night*, i. e. God give you good-night.

25. *of*, by.

29. *approve our eyes*, confirm the evidence of them.

36. *yond*, *yon* : the two words were used indifferently.

37. *illumine*, illumine.

42. It was believed that the best way of exorcising a spirit was to speak Latin to it. Horatio was a scholar and therefore knew Latin.

45. *It would be spoke to*, it wishes to be spoken to. It was believed that a ghost could not take the first word.

48. *Denmark*, i. e. King of Denmark. So 'Norway', l. 61, &c.

56. *I might not this believe*, I could not believe this. 'May' and 'might' were frequently used with the sense of 'can' and 'could'.

57. *avouch*, avouchment. Shakespeare has taken the verb and made a noun of it without change of form. (Cp. l. 75 ('impress'), III. i. 175 ('hatch,' 'disclose'), &c.

61. *Norway*. Cp. l. 48 *n*.

62. *parle*, parley.

63. *the sledded Polacks*, the Poles with their sledges. With 'Polack' cp. *Fr. Polaque*.

65. *jump*, pat. Cp. v. ii. 389.

67. *In what particular thought*, &c., what particular line of thought to follow out I know not.

68. *in the gross and scope of my opinion*, to give a round judgement ('gross') so far as my mind can reach ('scope').

70. *Good now* is short for 'My good Horatio, now'. Cp. *Tempest*, I. i. 3 : 'Good, speak to the mariners,' where 'good' = good boatswain.

72. *toils the subject of the land*, makes the subject population toil. This collective form, 'the subject,' occurs also in I. ii. 33. Cp. 'the general', II. ii. 466.

74. *mart*, marketing.

75. *impress*, impressment, i. e. enforced service. Cp. l. 57 *n*.

77. *toward*, on foot.

83. *emulate*, emulous.

89. *seiz'd of*, possessed of : a legal term.

90. I. *a moiety competent Was gaged*, a portion sufficient was pledged.

Strictly a 'moiety' is a half (Fr. *moitié*), but it was used freely for any portion.

94. *carriage of the article designed*, bearing or purport of the article drawn up.

96. *unimproved*. Either (1) untutored, undisciplined; or (2) not yet turned to advantage.

98. *Shark'd up a list of lawless resolute*s, snapped up indiscriminately and enrolled a band of lawless desperadoes.

100. *That hath a stomach in't*, that needs stomach or courage.

106. *head*, the chief mover or director.

107. *romage*, rummage, bustle.

108. *I think it be no other but e'en so*, I think it is possibly no otherwise than as you say. The subjunctive 'be' indicates indecision.

109. *Well may it sort*. The full meaning is: it sorts well with these things if these things be so.

111. *the question of these wars*, i.e. the subject of them.

113 f. This passage is a vivid reminiscence of *Julius Caesar*, I. iii. 10-32, and II. ii. 17-24. Shakespeare had just finished writing *Julius Caesar* when he set to work on *Hamlet*.

116-18. Something has dropped out between ll. 116 and 117, and we cannot restore the syntax.

118. *Disasters* (Fr. *désastre*, Lat. *astrum*, star) is used with a strong sense of its original meaning, 'an unfavourable aspect of a star or planet.'

the moist star is the moon.

121. *precurs*e, forerunning (formed literally from Lat. *prae-* and *cursus*).

123. *the omen* is here used for the ominous event itself.

125. *climates*, regions. 'Climate' is a variation on 'climate', which was used as we still use 'clime'.

127. *I'll cross it, though it blast me*. To cross the path of a ghost, it was believed, brought one under its influence.

134. *happily*, haply. Both forms are common. Cp. II. ii. 412.

140. *partisan*, a sort of halbert, a staff with an axe and hook or spike at the top.

154. *extravagant and erring*, vagrant and wandering. Both words are used in their original Latin sense, the first from *extra-vagari*, to roam out of bounds, the second from *errare*, to wander.

155. *confine*, place of confinement. Usually it means simply 'bound', 'limit'. Cp. II. ii. 255-6.

156. *probation*, proof.

158. *'gainst that season comes*: in preparation for its coming.

162. *strike*. Planets were thought sometimes to strike and blast. Cp. the next note.

163. *takes*, strikes with infection. Cp. 'He blasts the tree and takes the cattle' (*Merry Wives of Windsor*, IV. iv. 32); 'Whirlwinds, star-blasting, and taking' (*Lear*, III. iv. 61).

164. *gracious*, full of divine grace.

166. *russet*, grey, ash-coloured. In *Midsummer-Night's Dream* it is used to describe the colour of a jackdaw's head: 'russet-pated choughs' (III. ii. 21).

173. *loves*. We should say 'love', thinking of the love of all together. Shakespeare says 'loves', thinking of the love of each. (Cp. I. ii. 250, 253 ('loves'); II. ii. 14 ('companies')).

ACT I, SCENE II. 9. *The imperial jointress* is the queen dowager.

10. *defeated, disfigured, defaced, spoiled* (OFr. *defait, defeat*, p. part. of *defaire*, to undo, mar, destroy). (Cp. II. ii. 606, and *Othello*, I. iii. 346: 'Defeat thy favour with an usurp'd beard' (i. e. disfigure your appearance with a false beard).)

11. *With one auspicious and one dropping eye*, with one eye telling of good fortune, the other dropping tears.

14-15. *barr'd* Your better wisdoms, i. e. excluded them, forbidden them expression.

17. *that you know*, that (which) you know.

20. *disjoint and out of frame*, disjointed and out of gear.

21. *Colleagu'd with the dream of his advantage*, taking this dream of his superiority for his colleague or ally. 'Colleagu'd' is here trisyllabic.

24. *bands, bonds*. They are the same word.

31. *gait*, proceeding.

32. *full proportions* means the full numbers proportionate to his needs, i. e. the full numbers necessary. (Cp. *Henry V*, I. ii. 136-7: 'We must . . . lay down our proportions to defend Against the Scot.')

33. *subject*. Cp. I. i. 72.

38. *delated articles*, the articles or heads of instruction transferred or handed over to them.

allow should be 'allows', after the subject 'scope'. Shakespeare's ear was guided by the intervening plural, 'articles'. This is a very common mistake both in speech and writing. (Cp. *Julius Caesar*, V. i. 33: 'The posture of your blows are yet unknown.')

45. *lose your voice, speak in vain*. Cp. I. 118.

47. *more native to the heart*: more allied by nature to it.

56. *pardon* here almost means 'consent'. Cp. III. ii. 336.

62. *Take thy fair hour*, enjoy life while you are young.

63. *thy best graces spend it at thy will*, spend the time as you will, in the exercise of your best graces or accomplishments.

64. *cousin* here means nephew. It was used loosely of all those relationships which involve cousinship in the strict sense, i. e. uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, &c.

65. *A little more than kin, and less than kind*. His mother's marriage with his uncle had made him more than a mere kinsman; and 'less than kind', because he hated his uncle-father. This pun on 'kin' and 'kind' is a favourite with Shakespeare, and more natural than most. For 'kind' comes from 'kin', and originally describes the feeling of one kinsman for another. In Elizabethan English it was used to mean 'true to the natural feelings of kinship', especially 'filial', and on that sense Hamlet plays. Cp. II. ii. 617 ('kindless').

67. *sun*. He puns on 'sun' and 'son', again alluding to his new relationship to his uncle.

68. *nighted*, black as night.

70. *vailed*, lowered (Fr. *avaler*).

81. *haviour*, deportment, demeanour. 'Haviour', which originally

meant 'possession' (Fr. *avoir*), was gradually assimilated to the meaning of 'behaviour'.

90. *bound*, i.e. was bound. For this ellipse, natural in compressed speech, cp. III. iii. 62, &c.

92. *obsequious sorrow*, such sorrow as one offers in obsequies of the dead.

persever. 'Persevere' is in Shakespeare always 'persever', accented on the second syllable.

93. *condolement* does not mean consolation, but mourning, grief. Cp. Bottom in *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, I. ii. 29: 'if I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure.'

95. *incorrect to heaven*, unchastened or unsubdued to the will of heaven. Cp. I. 101.

99. *As any the most vulgar thing to sense*, as any of the things most common or obvious to the senses. This is the original sense of 'vulgar' (Lat. *vulgaris*, common). Cp. I. iii. 61.

107. *unprevailing*, unavailing.

110-12. *impart* has no object as the lines stand. Perhaps Shakespeare meant: like a kind father to his son and heir do I offer you your share of my position.

113. *Wittenberg*: a University town in Germany, well known in Shakespeare's time as the place where Luther began his battle with the Roman Church, and as the scene of the story of Faustus.

115. *bend you to remain*, bend or incline your will to remain.

124. *Sits smiling to my heart*. 'Sits to my heart' goes together, and means 'sits close to my heart'.

127. *rouse*, bumper. So I. iv. 8, II. i. 58. The firing of cannon on such occasions was a well-known Danish custom.

bruit, loudly report (Fr. *bruit*).

134. *uses*, usages.

137. *merely*, absolutely: the original sense (Lat. *merus*, pure, undiluted).

139-40. *that was, to this, Hyperion to a satyr*, that was, compared to this king. Hyperion compared to a satyr. For this use of 'to', cp. I. v. 52, III. i. 52, 53. 'Hyperion' is the sun-god (lit. 'the traveller overhead'). 'Satyrs' were sylvan deities, half-man half-goat.

141. *might not beteem*. 'Might' means 'could', and 'beteem' means 'permit'. For this sense of 'might', cp. I. i. 56.

149. *Niobe* was a woman of Greece. She wept herself to a stone for her seven sons and daughters, all slain by Apollo and Diana, the children of Leto. The reason for the massacre was simple. She had boasted of having finer children than Leto.

150. *discourse of reason*, the faculty of reasoning. 'Discourse' is the motion or progress of the mind from one judgement to another (Lat. *discursus*). Cp. IV. iv. 36.

155. *flushing*, redness.

157. *It is not nor it cannot come to good*. The negatives are repeated for emphasis.

163. *I'll change that name with you*. He means: 'I'll be your servant, and you my friend.'

164. *what make you from Wittenberg?* What are you doing here, what business brings you from Wittenberg? So II. ii. 284, &c.

179. *upon* is here used adverbially, as in *Troilus and Cressida*, v. vi. 10: 'The hour prefix'd . . . comes fast upon.'

192. *Season your admiration*, qualify your astonishment. 'Admiration' has its original sense (Lat. *admiratio*, wonder).

193. *attent*, attentive.

198. *the dead east and middle of the night*. 'Vast' here means vacant immensity, immensity of desolation. 'Vast' and 'vasty' in Shakespeare have always this double meaning of their Latin original, *vastus*. For the adjective 'vast' as a noun, cp. *Tempest*, I. ii. 327: 'urchins Shall forth at vast of night.'

200. *at points*, at all points.

cap-a-pie comes from OFr. *cap a pie* (pied), 'head to foot.'

209. *deliver'd*, reported. Cp. I. 193 above.

213. *platform*, terrace.

229. *beaver*. This was the lower part of the face-guard of a helmet, which could be lowered or raised at pleasure (ME. *baviere*, from OFr. *bavière*, a child's bib).

234. *constantly*, fixedly, steadily.

247. *Let it be tenable in your silence still*, look on it still as something you ought to keep silent about.

253. *Your loves, as mine to you*. Hamlet corrects their phrase 'our duty', and says that their love is what he wishes to have, as they have his. He made a similar remonstrance in I. 163. For the plural 'loves' here and in I. 250, cp. I. i. 173 n.

ACT I, SCENE III. 2-3. *as the winds give benefit And convoy is assistant*, according as the winds are favourable and the means of conveying messages can be found.

6. *a fashion*, and therefore changeable.

a toy in blood, a whim of passion. 'Blood', meaning passion, is often opposed to 'judgement', e.g. in III. ii. 74.

7. *primy nature*, nature in her springtime. For 'prime' see the song in *As You Like It*: 'And therefore take the present time, With a hey, and a ho, and a hey nonino; For love is crowned with the prime In the springtime, &c.' (v. iii. 32-5).

8. There is a natural pause after 'permanent', and this pause makes up the metre of the line.

9. *supplianee of a minute*, which supplies or fills up a minute; as we should say, a minute's pastime. Accent 'supplianee'.

11. *eressent*, in its growth. This is the original sense (Lat. *crecere*, to grow: pres. part. *crecens*).

12-14. *this temple*, &c. 'This temple' is the body. The metaphor comes from St. John ii. 21. It suggested the further metaphor in I. 13, of the soul's priestly 'service' in the 'temple' of the body.

15. *cautel*, deceit.

17. *His greatness weigh'd*, in consideration of his greatness.

22-4. His choice must be limited to what his subjects will approve and acquiesce in.

25-8. *It fits your wisdom . . . goes withal*. If you are wise you will

believe it only so far as his particular position allows him freedom to carry out his promises : which is just so far as he can carry the voice of public opinion in Denmark with him.

40. *buttons*, buds (Fr. *boutons*).

44. *Youth to itself rebels, though none else near*, youth rebels against itself, i.e. against self-restraint, though no other tempter be near.

49. *Whiles* and 'while' were used indifferently.

51. *recks not his own rede*, regards not his own counsel.
fear me not, fear not for me.

59. *character*, inscribe. Accent 'character'. Cp. *As You Like It*, III. ii. 6 : 'These trees shall be my books. And in their barks my thoughts I'll character' (where the accent is 'cháacter').

60. *Nor any unproportion'd thought his act*. Do not, he says, put into action any thought out of harmony or proportion with the occasion. 'His' for 'its', as usual.

61. *vulgar*, common. Cp. I. ii. 99.

62. *and their adoption tried* : a compressed way of saying, 'and whose adoption thou hast tried.'

64-5. *do not dull thy palm*, &c., do not dull your palm by shaking hands with every new-comer.

67. *th' opposed*, your opponent. The regular Elizabethan word for an 'opponent' was an 'opposite'. Cp. v. ii. 62.

69. *censure*, opinion ; the original neutral sense (Lat. *censere*, to judge, estimate).

77. *husbandry*, economy.

81. *season*, mature, ripen, so that it may bring forth fruit.

83. *tend*, attend, wait.

94. *put on me*, urged upon me.

106-9. The 'poor phrase' he has run out of breath is 'tender'. 'In l. 106 he uses the noun 'tenders' in its financial sense, but with an old punster's eye for the suggestion of 'tendemesses' in it. In l. 107 'tender' = care for, regard, as in iv. iii. 44. &c. In l. 109 it means simply 'hand over', 'present'.

111. *Ay, fashion you may call it*. Cp. l. 6 above.

go to, get away.

115. *springs to catch woodcocks*, snares for silly decoys. See v. ii. 320 n.

116. *prodigal* is used for 'prodigally'.

117-20. *these blazes . . . take for fire*. These burning vows and promises, which are mere blazes, extinguished both in light and heat even in their very making, you must not take for real fire. It may be remarked that Shakespeare never uses 'extinguished', always 'extinct' or 'extincted' (Lat. *extinguere*, *extinctum*).

122-3. *Set your entreatments at a higher rate Than a command to parley*. 'Entreatment' means conversation, interview. The meaning is : Don't make your interviews so cheap as to grant one whenever, like a conqueror, he commands a parley.

126. *in few*, in short (lit. in few words).

127-9. The meaning is : Do not be deceived by the innocent colour ('dye') in which his vows are dressed. They are merely mercenary ('brokers') : their dress ('investments') is a deceit ; they plead an unholy suit.

Though 'investments' here means dress, I am sure that the incorrigible Polonius had a punster's eye on its commercial sense, suggested by 'brokers'. He had an eye, too, on the other sense of 'suits' suggested by 'investments'.

132. *slander*, abuse.

134. *come your ways*, come along: an everyday phrase.

ACT I, SCENE IV. 2. *eager*, sharp, bitter (Fr. *aigre*). So in i. v. 69.

8. *wake*, hold a wake or a night revel. The noun 'wake' is still used in this sense.

rouse. Cp. i. ii. 127.

9. *wassail*, carousing, health-drinking (OE. *was hal*, be of health).

up-spring. This was a high-kicking hilarious Teutonic dance (Ger. *hüpfauft*).

10-12. This was a Danish drinking custom, well known to Elizabethan writers. It annoyed Hamlet that the drinking customs of the Danes should be so well known as they were (ll. 17-22).

18. *tax'd of other nations*, censured by other nations.

19. *clepe*, call (OE. *clapian*). The word was archaic by Shakespeare's time.

20. *addition*, title, designation. So ii. i. 47.

21. *at height*, in high heroic fashion.

22. *our attribute*, our reputation. So twice elsewhere in Shakespeare.

24. *mole of nature*, natural blemish.

27. *complexion*, disposition or humour: lit. the 'combination' of qualities of which a man's character is composed (Lat. *com*, together, and *nectere*, to plait, twine).

28. *pales*, enclosures.

29-30. *some habit . . . manners*, some habit whose influence robs manners of their full plausiveness or power to please.

32. *Being nature's livery, or fortune's star*, i.e. due either to nature or to accidental misfortune.

34. *undergo*, sustain, support.

35. *in the general censure*, in the judgement of mankind. For 'censure' cp. i. iii. 69.

36-8. *the dram of eale*, &c. These lines are meaningless. Numerous emendations of 'eale' and 'of a doubt' have been proposed, but none which can be thought at all satisfactory.

40. *spirit of health*, a healthy spirit, i.e. a saved soul, not a lost one.

43. *such a questionable shape*, i.e. one which so obviously invites question or interrogation.

47. *canoniz'd*. The rites with which his bones were buried are taken as a kind of canonization of them. Accent 'canóniz'd'.

48. *cerements*, winding-sheets. Shakespeare probably pronounced the word, not 'ce-re-ments', but 'cere-ments'. The first syllable, 'cere-', represents the Latin *cera*, wax. A 'cerceloth' was a waxed winding-sheet, used in embalming.

49. *inurn'd*, entombed (lit. 'in-tombed').

52. *complete*. Accent 'cómplete'.

54. *we fools of nature*, we whom nature uses for her sport. 'We' is loose grammar for 'us'.

56. *reaches*. He might have said 'reach', but he was thinking of the reach of each one of their souls. (p. i. i. 173 n ('loves')).

59. *impartment*, communication.

65. *a pin's fee*, a pin's worth.

73. *deprive your sovereignty of reason*, take away the sovereignty of your reason, i. e. deprive it of its just ascendancy over the other faculties. For 'deprive' governing the thing taken, cp. *Lucrece*, 1186: "'Tis honour to deprive dishonour'd life."

75. *toys of desperation*, mad whims, desperate fancies. Cp. i. iii. 6.

82. *artery*, ligament. Cp. 'The bones in the Joynt are covered with Arteries, which are weaker than bones' (A. Fox, 1658; quoted *N.E.D.*).

83. *the Nemean lion's nerve*. The killing of the Nemean lion was one of the twelve labours of Hercules. 'Nerve' has its original Latin sense of 'sinew', 'muscle' (*nervus*).

85. *lets me*, hinders me.

91. *it*, i. e. the 'issue' (l. 89).

ACT I, SCENE V. 6. *bound*, obliged.

12. *nature* here means 'life'.

19 *an end*, on end. Cp. 'abed' = on bed; 'asleep' = on sleep ('on sleep' occurs in Acts xiii. 36).

20. *porpentine*, porcupine.

21. *eternal blazon*, blazon or proclamation of what eternity is like.

27. *in the best*, i. e. at the best.

33 *Lethe wharf*, the wharf of the river Lethe, the river of oblivion in Hell. Whoever drank its waters lost all memory. 'Lethe' does without the possessive sign, like many place-names in Shakespeare (e.g. 'Tiber banks,' *Julius Caesar*, i. i. 62).

37-8. *Is by a forged process of my death Rankly abus'd*, is by a false official report of the manner of my death grossly deceived. 'Process' here combines something of its legal meaning of 'writ' (cp. Fr. *procès-verbal*) with its meaning in, for example, *The Merchant of Venice*, iv. i. 275: 'Tell her the process of Antonio's end.'

41. *adulterate*, adulterous. For the form, cp. i. i. 83 ('emulate').

52. *To*, compared to. See i. ii. 139-40.

61. *secure*, careless, unguarded: the original Latin sense. Cp. *Richard II*, ii. i. 267: 'And yet we strike not, but securely perish.' Accent here 'sécure'.

62. *hebona*: the name of some vegetable substance yielding a poisonous juice; also called 'hebenon' and 'hebon'. It has been thought to be the same as henbane; but the point is of no importance.

68. *posset*, thicken, curdle: only here as a verb. A 'posset' was a mixture of hot milk, eggs, ale or sack, &c., usually taken towards bedtime.

69. *eager* has the same meaning here as in i. iv. 2. The action of rennet when dropped into milk is the sort of thing Shakespeare had in mind.

71. *a most instant tetter*, an instantaneous eruption.

bark'd about, covered like bark on a tree.

72. *lazar-like*, leper-like. A 'lazar' was a leper, from Lazarus of the gospels.

75. *dispatch'd*, bereaved. A loose and incorrect use, suggested by the main idea of murder.

77. *Unhousel'd*, without having received the sacrament (OE. *husel*, the Eucharist).

disappointed, without appointment or equipment for the last journey.

unanel'd, without having received extreme unction or the last anointment of the dying (ME. *an* = on + *clien*, to oil, from OE. *clē*, oil). Pronounce as if 'unaneel'd'.

89. *matin*, morning (Fr. *matin*).

93. *And shall I couple hell?* Shall I add hell to the other two? Shall I appeal to hell as well as to heaven and earth?

94. *instant*, instantly.

97. *this distracted globe*. He holds his head.

98. *table*, tablet. Cp. l. 107 below.

99. *fond*, foolish.

records. Accent 'recórd's'.

100. *saws*, sayings, maxims.

all forms, all pressures past, all past images and impressions made upon the mind. Cp. III. ii. 28, where the body of the phrase is repeated.

107. *tables*. Cp. l. 98 above. In II. ii. 136 he talks of his 'table-book', which is the same thing, namely, a memorandum-book.

110. *word*, watchword.

116. *Hillo, ho, ho, boy! come, bird, come*. He takes up Horatio's cry, which was a falconer's cry to his hawk.

118. *Good my lord*. We have already noted the traditional order in such phrases of address (I. i. 70 n.).

127. *without more circumstance at all*, without any more circumlocution.

147. *Upon my sword*. 'Mr. Garrick produced me a passage, I think, in *Brantôme*, from which it appeared, that it was common to swear upon the sword, that is, upon the cross which the old swords had upon the hilt' (Johnson).

150. *true-penny*: 'a familiar phrase for an honest fellow' (Johnson).

151. *in the cellarage*. The ghost's voice came from the cellarage under the stage.

156. *Hic et ubique?* 'here and everywhere?'

163. *pioner*, pioneer. To 'pion' was to dig or trench, and a 'pioneer' was a soldier whose special duty was excavating, digging trenches, &c. The word is still in military use.

165. *And therefore as a stranger give it welcome*. He means: ask no questions and keep your thoughts to yourself.

172. *To put an antic disposition on*, to behave fantastically, like an 'antic' or buffoon.

174. *encumber'd*, folded.

176. *an if*: a common duplication of the conditional sign, for emphasis. 'An' by itself = if.

178. *giving out*. To 'give out' is to let be known.

note goes with 'shall' of l. 173, so that 'to' is out of place. The construction is broken.

185. *friending*. This means, if there were such a word, 'betriendingness'. It is more active than 'friendliness'.

ACT II, SCENE I. 7. *Inquire me first*. This use of 'me' was a common colloquial idiom. It gave vividness by drawing attention to the speaker. It represents an old dative.

Danskers, Danes.

8. *keep, dwell*. Cp. *Merchant of Venice*, III. iii. 19 (of Shylock): 'It is the most impenetrable cur that ever kept with men.'

10. *By this encompassment and drift of question*, by this roundabout route of inquiry.

11-12. *come you more nearer Than your particular demands will touch it*, i. e. approach by these means more near to the object in view than you could by less general and more direct inquiries. 'It' is the object in view. 'More nearer' is the common double comparative, used, like the double negative, for emphasis.

13. *Take, assume.*

20. *forgeries, false charges.*

rank, gross. Cp. I. v. 38.

28. *season, qualify.* Cp. I. ii. 192.

31. *quaintly, artfully, ingeniously.* This is the original meaning. Cp. 2 *Henry VI*, III. ii. 274: 'To show how quaint an orator you are' (i. e. how skilled, how ingenious). The word came from OFr. *cointe, queinte*; and that from Lat. *cognitum*, 'known.'

34. *unreclaimed, untamed*: a term of falconry. To 'reclaim' a hawk was to recall it from its flight.

35. *Of general assault*, such as generally assail young men.

38. *a fetch of warrant*, a ruse of good warrant, a ruse warranted to succeed.

41. *Your party in converse*, the person you are conversing with.

43. *prenominate, aforementioned.*

45. *He closes with you in this consequence*, he falls in with you to this effect.

47-8. *According to the phrase or the addition Of man and country*, according to the phraseology or style of designation habitual to the man and his country. For 'addition' cp. I. iv. 20.

58. *a'* was a common colloquialism for 'he'.

o'ertook, overtaken by intoxication: a common euphemism for 'drunk'. We have had 'rouse' already, I. ii. 127.

64. *we of wisdom and of reach*, we wise and far-seeing ones.

65. *windlasses, winding circuitous courses.*

assays of bias is a metaphorical way of saying 'indirect attempts'. The metaphor is from the game of bowls. A bowler does not aim directly at the Jack, because his bowls are made with a bias, which makes them curl in after the first impetus has left them.

66. *By indirections find directions out*, by crooked means find out the straightforward truth.

68. *You have me?* You understand me?

71. *Observe his inclination in yourself*, use your own observation as well to find out his inclinations.

77. *closet*. Any private room was a 'closet'.

78. *unbrac'd, unfastened.*

80. *down-gyved to his ankle*, fallen like gyves or fetters about his ankle.

91. *As, as if.*

102. *ecstasy*, frenzy. Cp. III. i. 169 *n*.

103. *Whose violent property fordoes itself*, which is destroyed by its own quality ('property') of violence.

112. *quoted*, marked, scrutinized. Cp. *Titus Andronicus*, IV. i. 50: 'Note how she quotes the leaves.' To 'quote' meant originally to mark a book in the margin.

113. *wreck*, wreck, ruin.

beshriv my jealousy! a plague upon my suspicion! For 'jealousy' cp. IV. v. 19. So the French use *jalouser* and the Scots 'jalouse'.

114-15. *it is as proper to our age To cast beyond ourselves*, it is as much the property of age to over-reach itself (by being too wily).

118-19. He means that to conceal Hamlet's madness might cause more grief than the disclosure of his love for Ophelia would cause hate. The 'hate' is that of the King and Queen, who were likely, Polonius thought, to disapprove of such a match.

ACT II, SCENE II. 2. *Moreover that*, besides that.

7. *What it should be*. We say 'what it may be'. Cp. I. 87.

11. *of so young days*, from such early youth.

12. *so neighbour'd to his youth and humour*, i.e. so closely in touch with them.

14. *companies*, company. For the plural cp. I. i. 173, and I. iv. 56.

17. *Wh'er*. 'Whether' was generally pronounced, and often written, 'whe'r.'

18. *open'd*, disclosed.

22. *gentry*, i.e. courtesy, regarded as the distinguishing quality of gentry. So V. ii. 114. Cp. the similar use of Fr. *gentillesse*.

24. *the supply and profit of our hope*, the fulfilment and advancement of our hope. 'Supply' = filling up: the literal sense (Lat. *supplere*). So 'suppliance', I. iii. 9.

28. *your dread pleasures*. 'Dread' means commanding reverence. To the Red Cross Knight, Una was his 'dear dread' because she commanded his love and reverence (*Faerie Queene*, I. vi. 2).

30. *in the full bent*, in the full bent of our inclinations. Cp. I. ii. 115 ('bend').

38. *Heavens make*, &c. We should say, 'Heaven' or 'the Heavens'. But we still say 'Heavens!'

practices, doings. It usually carried a bad sense. Cp. IV. vii. 67 *n*.

56. *the main*, i.e. the main cause of all.

61. *Upon our first*, i.e. our first request. He refers to the first request contained in the 'articles' mentioned in I. ii. 38.

63. *Polack*. Cp. I. i. 63.

67. *borne in hand*, abused with false pretences.

67-8. *sends out arrests On Fortinbras*, sends out injunctions to Fortinbras to cease operations. 'He' is understood before 'sends'.

71. *To give the assay of arms*, to make trial of arms.

79. *regards of safety and allowance*, i.e. provisions ensuring safety and defining what the army may do in its march through.

80. *It likes us well*, it pleases us well. So V. ii. 279, &c.

81. *at our more consider'd time*, at some time more suited for consideration of business.

83. *well-took*, well-handled.

86. *expostulate*, discuss fully. Shakespeare uses the word both in this irregular sense and in its regular and proper sense of making complaint.

87. *should be*, may be. Cp. l. 7.

90. *wit*. Not 'wit' in our narrow meaning, but 'judgement', 'understanding'. This was the original sense. We still talk of our 'wits' and of the 'wit of man'.

97-8. It is curious how popular the jingle of 'tis true' has become among our journalists and cheap novelists. They seem to be unaware that Polonius himself called it a foolish turn of speech.

105. *Perpend*, ponder: a pedantic affected word, used only by such persons as Polonius, Pistol, and Touchstone.

109. *beautified* here means 'endowed with beauty'. It was a newish and perhaps affected form. The earliest example in the *New English Dictionary* is from Sidney's *Arcadia* (1580). Polonius disliked it therefore.

112. *In her excellent white bosom*. The practice of carrying letters in the bosom of their dress has never been unknown among ladies. Cp. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, III. i. 250: 'Thy letters . . . shall be deliver'd Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love.'

122. *whilst this machine is to him*, whilst this physical machine, his body, keeps on going.

126. *more above*, moreover.

136. *play'd the desk or table-book*, been the dumb agent of their correspondence. For 'table-book' cp. I. v. 107.

137. *given my heart a winking*, made my heart shut its eyes (the regular meaning of 'wink' in Shakespeare). The whole line means: had I shown a silent sympathy by winking at the affair and saying nothing.

138. *with idle sight*, with an indifferent eye.

139. *round*, roundly.

141. *out of thy star*, out of thy sphere. Fortune, it was thought, assigns us our stars and the orbit of our lives. Some are higher and nobler than others.

145. *took the fruits of my advice*, i.e. profited by it.

148. *watch*, a waking or sleepless state.

149. *lightness*, light-headedness. Polonius gives the false impression that he had seen it all coming on, and had noted every stage of it.

159. *the centre*, the centre of the earth.

163. *arras*, tapestry: so called because of the famous tapestry factory at Arras in the north of France.

168. *poor wretch*: used with no feeling of contempt, but half in pity, half in tenderness. Cp. IV. vii. 183.

170. *board him presently*, accost him forthwith.

185. *a good kissing carrion*, a carrion good for kissing. So we speak of 'good drinking water'. This image, and his application of it, show Hamlet's complete disaffection to the human race and to the process by which it is continued.

190. *How say you by that?* what do you say to that?

204. *purgings*, discharging.

207. *not honesty*, not decent.

209. *should* for 'would'.

216. *a happiness*, a happiness or felicity of expression.

225. *withal* simply means 'with'.

255. *confines*, places of confinement (as in I. i. 155).

274. *Then are our beggars bodies, and our monarchs and outstretched heroes the beggars' shadows*. The whole argument is as follows. Since 'the substance of the ambitious' is a shadow (l. 268), then monarchs and heroes are shadows. Now the opposite of a shadow is a body; therefore beggars, who are the opposite of monarchs and heroes, must be bodies. Further, since every shadow is the shadow of some body, monarchs and heroes must be the shadows of beggars.

275. *outstretched* probably means 'straining every nerve', like a runner.

276. *by my fay, by my faith* (Fr. *foi*).

282. *I am most dreadfully attended*. He means, by his thoughts.

283-4. *But, in the beaten way of friendship, what make you at Elsinore?* But, to keep in the beaten high-road of friendly talk, let me ask you what is your business at Elsinore? For 'make' cp. I. ii. 164.

288. *too dear a halfpenny*, too dear at a halfpenny. For the omission of the preposition Clark and Wright quote Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*, l. 8875 'dere y-nough a jane' (i.e. at a jane, which was a small Genoese coin).

301-2. *the consonancy of our youth*. They had grown up together. Cp. II. 11, 12.

304. *proposer*, master of exposition.

305. *even and direct*, plain and straightforward.

308. *I have an eye of you*, I have an eye upon you.

311-13. *so shall my anticipation*, &c., so shall my anticipation forestall your disclosure of the reason why you were sent for, and leave your pledge of secrecy to the King and Queen unimpaired.

321. *fretted with golden fire*. To 'fret' a roof is to adorn it with carved or embossed work in decorative patterns (*N.E.D.*). Shakespeare, having thought of the sky as a roof, carries out the figure in 'fretted'. Cp. *Cymbeline*, II. iv. 87: 'The roof o' the chamber With golden cherubims is fretted.'

326. *express*, perfectly modelled for its purpose.

338. *lenten entertainment*, i.e. meagre, like the fare in Lent.

339. *coted them*, passed them: a coursing term. One hound was said to 'cote' another when he outstripped him and turned the hare.

343. *target*, targe, a small shield.

345. *the humorous man*, the man who represented 'humours', or the oddities of character. For example, the military braggart, like Shakespeare's Pistol or Ben Jonson's Captain Bobadill; the foolish country justice, like Justice Shallow, and so on. The term had become a catch-word. As a rule the 'humorous man' was a good deal knocked about in the play; whence Hamlet's assurance.

346. *tickle o' the sere*, ready to explode at the least thing. The 'sere' or 'serre' was the catch in a gun-lock (cp. Fr. *serre*, a claw, *serrer*, to clutch). 'Tickle' means responsive to the least tickle or touch.

355-6. *I think their inhibition comes y the means of the late innovation*.

I think this arrest of their functions is due to the late innovation. By the 'late innovation' Rosencrantz must mean the recent predominance of the boy-actors, which had driven their seniors to tour the provinces. Hamlet, who appears to be out of touch with recent events, fails to take his meaning, and puts a new set of questions to him, which compel him to be explicit.

362. *aery*, nest or brood (properly of hawks). Also spelt 'eyrie'.

eyases. An 'eyas' was a young untrained hawk, not long taken from the nest.

364. *that cry out on the top of question*, whose shrill voices drown debate. 'Question' here, and in many other places in Shakespeare, means 'discussion'.

The ranks of the playwrights were divided over the late innovation, and their plays were full of topical controversy and personality. At the time when *Hamlet* was written the popularity of the boy-actors had almost silenced the other side.

364-5. *are most tyrannically clapped for't*. The audience clapped like tyrants. This alludes partly to the tyrant's part in the old plays, which was as noisy as possible; partly to the tyrannical behaviour of the audience in listening only to one side of the question (see previous note).

366. *the common stages*, the regular theatres.

367. *are afraid of goose-quills*, are afraid of being satirized by the pens of the playwrights who write for the children's theatre. (cp. l. 374 ('their writers')). Among these playwrights were Chapman and Ben Jonson.

370. *escoted*, paid for, maintained (OFr. *escoter*, fr. *escot*, Mod.Fr. *écot*, a contribution). The word survives in the phrase 'scot and lot'.

370-1. *pursue the quality no longer than they can sing*, follow the profession only so long as their voices are unbroken. 'The quality' was the regular word for the actor's profession.

375-6. *their own succession*, what they must themselves succeed to: namely, the condition of ordinary adult players.

379. *tarre them to controversy*, set them on to controversy: used especially of setting on dogs to fight.

380-2. *no money bid for argument, &c.* The 'argument' of a play is its subject or plot. So III. ii. 150, 245. The meaning is: there was no market for plays upon subjects which did not bring in this controversy.

385. *carry it away*, carry it off, carry the day.

386-7. *Hercules and his load too*. The sign of the Globe Theatre was a figure of Hercules with the globe on his shoulders. It was Shakespeare's theatre, and had been built only three years before. He means that they had carried the day even against the Globe.

389. *It is not very strange*. That is, so sudden a revolution in popular favour is not so very strange.

390. *mows*, grimaces (Fr. *moue*).

392. *picture in little*, miniature.

'Sblood is for 'God's blood'. It was a common oath.

398. *appurtenance*, proper accompaniment.

399. *let me comply with you in this garb*, let me be ceremonious with you in this fashion. For 'comply' cp. v. ii. 195.

400. *my extent to the players*, i.e. the courtesies which I extend to them.

Similarly in *Titus Andronicus*, iv. iv. 3, 'the extent of justice' is used to mean the extending or exercising of justice.

405. *I am but mad north-north-west.* Don't think I am mad all round the compass, he says. The truth is, I am mad only when the wind is from one point of the compass; that is, I am mad only on one point. That point, we understand (though Rosencrantz and Guildenstern do not), is his father's murder and the circumstances of it.

406. *when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a handsaw,* when the wind blows from any other quarter, he goes on, I can tell one thing from another as well as any man; that is, on all other points I am normal and sane.

This is the plain sense. The conjectures of scholars about the possible meanings of a 'hawk' and a 'handsaw' are of interest only to the curious. The phrase sounds like a proverb.

412. *Happily.* Cp. i. i. 134.

415-16. *You say right, sir; o' Monday morning; 'twas so indeed.* These words are spoken at random, to prevent Polonius from suspecting that they had been talking of him.

419. *Roscious* was a famous Roman actor of the time of Cicero.

421. *Buzz, buzz!* An exclamation of remonstrance or contempt when any one was telling a threadbare story.

423. *Then came each actor on his ass.* Probably a line from some old song.

427. *scene indivisible.* This must mean a play in which the scene does not change about, which moves evenly round one central scene: like *The Tempest*. According to the ancient laws of drama, which had come down from Aristotle, all good plays must be of this sort.

poem unlimited would seem to be the opposite of 'scene indivisible'. It should mean, therefore, a play which observes no such restrictions of scene, in which the action jumps about from one place to another. It is probably for this reason that it is called a 'poem', as being something which neglects the laws of the stage. Most of Shakespeare's plays are of this sort. He apologizes for it in the Prologues or Choruses prefixed to each of the Acts of *Henry V*.

428. *Seneca cannot be too heavy, nor Plautus too light.* Seneca was a Roman writer of tragedies (A.D. 2-66), and Plautus (250-184 B.C.) a Roman writer of comedies. Both were well known in England at this time. Their plays were acted at the Universities, and were much translated and imitated.

430. *For the law of writ and the liberty, these are the only men,* for the law of writ and the liberty of writ, these are the only men. The 'law of writ' must mean the restricted 'indivisible' way (see note above, l. 427) followed by all who acknowledged the ancient laws of drama (e.g. Ben Jonson). The 'liberty of writ' must mean the free 'unlimited' way (see note above, l. 427) followed by those who acknowledged no such laws (e.g. Shakespeare). At both the one and the other, says Polonius, these men are equally unrivalled.

431. *O Jephthah, judge of Israel, what a treasure hadst thou!* From here to l. 448 Hamlet plays with the first stanza of an old ballad, to be found in Percy's *Reliques*: 'Have you not heard these many years ago, | Jephthah was judge of Israel? | He had one only daughter and

no mo. | The which he loved passing well: | And as by lott, | God wot. | It so came to pass, | As Gods will was | That great wars there should be, | And none should be chosen chief but he.'

447. *The first row of the pious chanson*, i. e. the first stanza of the old ballad just quoted.

448. *abridgment*. 'Abridgement,' meaning an abridgement or epitome of life, a representation of life in miniature, was a technical term for a play. Cp. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, v. i. 39: 'Say, what abridgment have you for this evening? What masque? what music?'

The Folios read 'abridgments', which may be right. The meaning would then be, 'look where my epitomes of life come.' In exactly the same sense, in l. 556 below, he describes the players as 'the abstracts and brief chronicles of the time'.

452. *is valenced*, has got a 'valance' or fringe, i. e. a beard.

453-4. *my young lady and mistress!* He addresses the youth who took the female parts. There were then no women on the stage. See *As You Like It*, Epilogue (spoken by Rosalind): 'If I were a woman I would kiss as many of you as had beards that pleased me.'

455. *chopine*, a kind of high cork shoe, fashionable about 1600 in Spain and Italy, especially at Venice, where it was sometimes worn 'three or four hand-breadths high'. In England, on the other hand, it was seldom worn except on the stage. The boy had grown.

457. *cracked within the ring*. Coins had a ring or circle marked upon them, enclosing the sovereign's head. A coin with a crack in it became uncurrent as soon as the crack extended from the edge beyond the ring.

459. *like French falconers, fly at anything we see*. French falconers, it was believed, 'did not regard the rigour of the game, but condescended to any quarry that came in their way; as their descendants are accused by British sportsmen of including in their game-bags the blackbird and the lark' (D. H. Madden).

461. *quality*. See l. 370 n.

465-6. *'twas caviare to the general*, i. e. too high a dainty for the general public. Caviare is sturgeon's roe, pressed and salted. It is one of those dainties for which you must acquire a taste. The word was pronounced 'cav-i-ár-e'. With 'the general' cp. l. i. 72 ('the subject').

467. *cried in the top of mine*, were of a higher pitch than mine, i. e. more authoritative, more listened to.

469. *digested*, well arranged (Lat. *digerere*, *digestum*, distribute, set in order).

471. *no sallots in the lines to make the matter savoury*. They were good honest lines, he says, without trimmings; good meat with none of your salads thrown in for a relish. 'Sallet' and 'salad' are the same word.

476-7. *Aeneas' tale to Dido*. The story of the fall of Troy and the slaughter of Aeneas' father, old King Priam, by Pyrrhus, son of the Greek champion Achilles, is the subject of Aeneas' tale to Queen Dido of Carthage in the second book of Virgil's *Aeneid*.

481. *the Hyrcanian beast*, the tiger. The tigers of Hyrcania were proverbial for fierceness. 'Hyrcania' was the western name for the wide district south of the Caspian Sea.

485. *the ominous horse*, the great wooden horse by which Troy was

won. The Greeks pretended to have given up the contest and sailed away, leaving this wooden structure behind. The Trojans were at first suspicious, but finally decided to haul it within the walls. This was their ruin, for it concealed a band of armed Greeks, who leaped out in the night-time, opened the gates to their countrymen, and sacked the sleeping city.

488. *total gules*, i.e. all red. 'Gules' is the heraldic word for red. It comes from Old French.

horridly trick'd, i.e. horridly sketched over (as a coat of arms is sketched over). This is another heraldic term. To 'trick' is to delineate arms (Dutch *trekken*, draw).

490. *Bak'd and impasted with the parching streets*. The blood was baked and made into a paste by the heat of the blazing streets. Troy was in flames.

493. *o'er-sized*, covered as with 'size' or glue.

504. *Ilium*: a poetical name for Troy.

507. *Takes prisoner Pyrrhus' ear*. All the buildings of the blazing city fall forward and collapse. The crash makes Pyrrhus stop dead.

510. *So, as a painted tyrant, Pyrrhus stood*. As he stood, he seemed like a picture of himself, posing, motionless, sword in air.

511. *like a neutral to his will and matter*, as if wholly indifferent to his purpose and object.

513. *against some storm*, when some storm is coming on.

514. *the rack* is the floating vapour in the sky.

515. *the orb below* is the earth.

517. *the region*, i.e. the region of the air. 'Region' could be used of any of the divisions of the world; Shakespeare uses it almost technically of the air. Cp. 'the region cloud' (*Sonnets*, xxxiii. 12); and 'region kites' in l. 615 below.

519. *Cyclops' hammers*. The Cyclops were giants in the service of Vulcan. They worked his forges, being therefore armourers and blacksmiths to the gods.

520. *forg'd for proof eterne*, forged to be proof (i.e. weapon-proof) everlastingly. For 'proof' cp. *Richard II*, i. iii. 73: 'Add proof unto mine armour with thy prayers.' 'Eterne' = eternal occurs in one other place in Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, iii. ii. 38. It is frequent in Chaucer.

525. *fellies*, felloes (i.e. the curved pieces of wood which make the rim of a wheel).

530. *jig*. A 'jig' meant not only a merry dance, but any merry ballad or the tune to which it was sung. Cp. iii. i. 152; ii. 133.

531. *Hecuba*: the wife of Priam and mother of Aeneas.

533. *mobled*, muffled up. The word was evidently unusual even in Shakespeare's day. It survives in Shropshire dialect.

537. *bisson rheum* probably means 'blinding tears'. 'Bisson' generally meant blind or purblind. Cp. *Coriolanus*, ii. i. 71: 'your bisson conspectuities' (your purblind perceptions). 'Rheum' means moisture from the eyes, mouth, or nose.

539. *o'erteemed*, worn with child-bearing. She had nineteen sons to Priam.

548. *milch*, mellow, soft, tender. The word is as old as the fourteenth century, and survives in dialect in the form 'melsh' or 'melch'. In

this form it is often used of 'mellow' fruits, or of mild 'soft' weather. It was also used in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the form 'melch-hearted' = tender-hearted, soft-hearted.

The invariable explanation of 'milch' as milk-giving, and so moist, is much less satisfactory. Whichever view be taken there should be no confusion. 'Milch' as I have explained it is not the 'milch' of 'milch-cow', but an entirely different, and, as I think, a much more suitable word.

549. *passion* means passionate sorrow, and is governed by 'made'. The word was used of any violent commotion of the mind (from its original sense of 'suffering': Lat. *pator*, *passus sum*), but especially of sorrow, as here.

550. *wh'er* is 'whether', spelt as pronounced.

555. *bestowed*, stowed, lodged.

556. *abstracts and brief chronicles of the time*. See the note on l. 448.

557. *you were better have*. Grammatically = it were better for you to have. 'You' is a dative come to be regarded as a nominative.

562. *God's bodikins*: a familiar oath, by 'God's body'.

587. *conceit*, fancy, idea.

588. *from her working all his visage wann'd*. 'Her' refers to his 'soul'. 'Wann'd' = grew wan.

590. *his whole function*, the action of all his faculties.

598. *the free*, the innocent, who are free from guilt. (Cp. III. ii. 255.

599. *amaze*, confound. The word had a stronger meaning then than now, so that 'amazement' might almost mean 'distraction'.

602. *peak*. We still say 'peak and pine', quoting unconsciously from *Macbeth*, I. iii. 23.

603. *John-a-dreams*, John of the dreams, i.e. a dreamy idle fellow. Cp. *John-a-nods*, *Jack-a-lantern*, &c.

unpregnant of my cause, with nothing working in me, with no spark of life in me for my cause.

605. *Upon whose property*, upon whose sacred person. It is the 'property' of a king that his person is sacred. The word is not to be taken in its ordinary modern sense.

606. *defeat*, destruction (lit. undoing). So v. ii. 58. The verb occurs in I. ii. 10, where see note.

612. *Swounds*: for 'God's wounds'. So 'Zounds!'

613-14. *pigeon-liver'd*, &c. Pigeons were thought to have no gall because of their mildness. Gall is bile, a bitter secretion of the liver, supposed to be the seat of the spirit of resentment.

615. *all the region kites*, all the kites of the air. See l. 517 n.

617. *kindless*. On 'kind' and 'kin' see I. ii. 65 n. As 'kind' in Shakespeare often means 'nature' or 'what is natural', so 'kindless' means 'unnatural'. Claudius's villany was unnatural because it was his brother he murdered.

625. *About, my brain!* That is, 'Turn to!' 'Set about it!'

627. *cunning*: as we speak of an artist's 'cunning'.

628. *presently*, forthwith.

631. *With most miraculous organ*, through the most miraculous instruments.

634. *tent*, probc. *blench*, flinch.

639. *with such spirits*, i.e. such as are in low spirits, as Hamlet was.

640. *Abuses me*, deludes me.

641. *More relative than this*, more closely related to the matter, more relevant.

ACT III, SCENE I. 1. *drift of circumstance*, i.e. going round about the matter. Cp. the similar phrase in II. i. 10; and I. v. 127 ('circumstance').

8. *keeps aloof*. The subject, 'he', is understood from 'him'. Cp. IV. i. 10.

13. *of our demands*. 'Of' = in the matter of. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are not telling the truth. It was just the other way in their interview with Hamlet.

14-15. *Did you assay him To any pastime?* Did you try to induce him to any pastime?

17. *o'er-raught*, overtook (lit. over-reached).

29. *closely*, secretly.

31. *Affront*, encounter, confront.

32. *espials*, spies.

43. *Gracious*, Your Grace.

44-6. *Read on this book*, &c. It was evidently a book of devotion. The appearance of being engaged in the 'exercise' of her devotion was to give a colour to her being alone.

52-3. 'To' in both lines means 'compared to'. So in I. ii. 139, I. v. 52. 'Painted' means fictitious, like the false complexion of a painted woman.

65. *rub*, impediment: a word from the game of bowls. Cp. *Richard II*, III. iv. 4, 5: 'Madam, we'll play at bowls. *Queen*. 'Twill make me think the world is full of rubs.'

67. *When we have shuffled off this mortal coil*, when we have eluded and got rid of the turmoil of this mortal life. 'Coil' = turmoil, bustle, was a common Elizabethan word. It was probably slang to begin with, and distinct from the other 'coil' (of rope).

68. *respect*, consideration.

72. *dispriz'd*, unprized, slighted.

75. *quietus*, discharge, release (from life). 'Quietus' was a legal term, and meant a discharge or acquittance given on settlement of an account. It was short for 'quietus est', which was mediaeval Latin for 'he is quit'.

76. *a bare bodkin*, a mere naked dagger.

fardels, packs, bundles (Fr. *fardeau*).

79. *bourn*, boundary, frontier.

85. *thought*, pensiveness, mental brooding. Cp. IV. v. 187, and *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 187: 'take thought and die.'

89. *orisons*, prayers (Fr. *oraisons*).

103. *honest*, virtuous: a regular meaning.

108-9. *your honesty should admit no discourse to your beauty*. He means that her virtue should stand sentry over her beauty, neither having nor allowing any communication with it.

110. *commerce*, intercourse.

120-1. *virtue cannot so inoculate our old stock but we shall relish of it*. To 'inoculate' is to engraft. This was the original sense (Lat. *inoculare*,

from *in + oculus*, eye, bud). 'Our old stock' is what we call 'the old Adam' in man, the taste of original sin. We shall always smack of it, says Hamlet.

125. *indifferent honest*, fairly virtuous.

135. *Go thy ways*. Cp. I. iii. 134.

153. *you jig, you amble*, you skip about like jig-dancers, you amble like geldings.

154-5. *nickname God's creatures, and make your wantonness your ignorance*. You affect the ignorance of innocence to call things by their wrong names, but it is all a ruse to cover your wantonness.

157. *all but one*. That 'one' is the King. Ophelia cannot understand, but we should have expected the eavesdropping King to note these words.

160. *courtier's, soldier's, scholar's eye, tongue, sword*. The natural order is 'courtier's, scholar's, soldier's' to suit 'eye, tongue, sword'. It is so printed in the imperfect first edition of 1603.

161. *The expectancy and rose of the fair state*, his country's hope, the fine flower and ornament of the state. 'Fair' is not so much an epithet of 'state' as a description of the effect of Hamlet upon it. It is not meant that the state is 'fair' in itself, but that his presence makes it so.

For other examples of this idiom cp. *Macbeth*, I. vi. 1-3: 'the air Nimble and sweetly recommends itself Unto our gentle senses' (where 'gentle' describes the effect upon their senses of the fine air); III. iv. 76: 'Ere human statute purg'd the gentle weal' (i.e. purged it and made it gentle).

162. *The glass of fashion and the mould of form*, the mirror of fashion and the model of deportment.

163. *of all observers*. 'Of' = by.

164. *deject*, dejected.

168-9. *That . . . feature of blown youth Blasted with ecstasy*. By a reversion to the metaphor of line 161 she thinks of his youth as a beautiful flower, full-blown, blasted with the blight of madness. 'Feature' means shape, figure, 'make' (OFr. *faiture*, from Lat. *factura*, make). 'Ecstasy' is the state of being 'beside oneself' (Gk. *ekstasis*): cp. II. i. 102; III. iv. 74.

172-3. *Nor . . . not*. The double negative gives emphasis at the expense of grammar.

175. *the hatch and the disclose*. For other examples of verbs used as nouns, cp. I. i. 57. 'Disclose' was the technical term for young birds' chipping the shell. It is so used in V. i. 309. In I. iii. 40 it is used of bursting of buds.

181. *variable*, varying.

182. *something-settled*, somewhat settled.

183-4. *puts him thus From fashion of himself*, puts him out of sorts, makes him unlike himself. The subject of 'puts' is not 'brains', but 'whereon . . . beating'. That is, the perpetual beating of his brains on which puts him thus out of sorts.

193-4. *in the ear Of all their conference*, i.e. within hearing of it.

194. *If she find him not*, if she do not find him out, if she fail to discover his secret.

ACT III, SCENE II. 5. *Nor do not.* Cp. III. i. 172-3.

11. *periwig-pated fellow.* Few men except actors wore periwigs in Shakespeare's time. The word is a popular corruption of Fr. *perruque*.

11-12. *tear a passion to tatters, to very rags, to split the ears of the groundlings.* The groundlings were the occupants of the 'ground' or pit of the theatre. They paid a penny for admission, and had to stand. They are 'a people', says Ben Jonson, 'that have no brains,' and 'will hiss anything that mounts above their grounded capacities' (*The Case is Altered*, II. iv). For the 'tearing of passions' and 'splitting of ears' see I. 16 n.

14. *capable of nothing but inexplicable dumb shows,* i.e. capable of appreciating nothing else. Cp. the 'dumb-show' in III. ii. 147 f.

16. *Termagant . . . Herod.* Termagant and Herod were favourite characters in the old miracle plays. The first was an imaginary god of the Saracens, the second was represented as the typical tyrant. Both were violent ranting parts. Cp. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, I. ii. 32 (Bottom): 'Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant. I could play Eccles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.'

24. *from, away from, contrary to.*

29. *pressure, impressure,* i.e. impression, stamp, image. In the same sense we talk of a thing having the 'stamp' of its age. Cp. I. v. 100.

come tardy off, come slackly off, i.e. slackly or weakly performed.

31-2. *the censure of which one must in your allowance o'erweigh a whole theatre of others,* the censure of which one judicious person you must allow to outweigh the judgement of a whole theatre of others.

38. *nor man, nor even of man.*

39. *men.* We should expect 'them' or 'em', and both have been suggested.

42. *indifferently, fairly well.*

43 f. *let those that play your clowns, &c.* This was an old grievance. The clown was a popular institution, older than the regular stage and regular play-writing, and exercised his old right to make extempore jokes for the amusement of the 'groundlings', quite apart from the play itself.

47. *barren, barren-witted.*

53. *presently, immediately.*

60. *As e'er my conversation coped withal,* as ever I engaged with in converse. 'Withal' means simply 'with'. For 'cope' cp. *As You Like It*, II. i. 67 (Duke Senior of Jaques): 'I love to cope him in these sullen fits' (i.e. cope with him, encounter him).

63. *revenue.* Accent 'révénue'.

65. *candied.* The original meaning of 'candy' was to 'make white' (either with hoar frost or with sugar), from Latin *candidus*. Here sugar is intended, and the word means 'sugared with hypocrisy'. In *The Tempest*, on the other hand, it means 'hoar-frosted' (II. i. 287), and we read in *Timon* of 'the cold brook candied with ice'.

absurd. Accent 'absurd'. So only here in Shakespeare.

66. *crook the pregnant hinges of the knee.* 'Pregnant' means apt, responsive, and so, ready to bend at the least hint. Cp. *Lear*, IV. vi. 228: 'pregnant to good pity' (i.e. responsive to it). The grammatical subject of 'crook' is 'the candied tongue', but the subject in the

writer's mind was of course the person meant thereby, the flattering courtier.

67. *thrift*, thriving, profit. Cp. l. 195 below, and *The Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 176: 'I have a mind presages me such thrift That I shall questionless be fortunate.'

69. *election*, choice.

74. *blood and judgment*, i.e. passion and reason. (Cp. I. iii. 6.

75-6. *a pipe for fortune's finger*, &c. Cf. l. 387 f.

84. *the very comment of thy soul*, putting your very soul into your note-taking.

85-6. *if his occulted guilt Do not itself unkennel*. The 'occulted' or hidden guilt of the King is thought of as a fox, concealed in its 'kennel' or hole.

89. *Vulcan's stithy*, Vulcan's forge. See II. ii. 520 n.

92. *In censure of his seeming*, to judge his looks. For 'censure' cp. I. iii. 69.

95. *I must be idle*. Possibly only 'I must seem unoccupied', but probably, 'I must be crazy.' This was a regular sense of 'idle', especially in the form 'idle-headed'. Cp. Hakluyt, *Voyages* (1599): 'crazed in mind and halfe out of his wits . . . hee became idle-headed' (N.E.D.). See further, III. iv. 11 n.

99. *of the chameleon's dish*, i.e. on air, on which the chameleon was believed to live.

100. *promise-crammed*. Perhaps he refers to the King's professions of love in I. ii. 108 f.

105. *you played once i the university, you say?* Plays, both English and Latin, were acted at stated times and on special occasions at Oxford and Cambridge. Hamlet had been acted at both places by 1603, and we know that a *Julius Caesar* in Latin was acted in Oxford in 1582.

109-10. *I did enact Julius Caesar: I was killed i the Capitol; Brutus killed me*. See the previous note. Caesar was killed in Pompey's theatre, but that he was killed in the Capitol was a traditional English belief as old as Chaucer, and already accepted by Shakespeare in his *Julius Caesar* (1601).

enact, act, perform.

113. *they stay upon your patience*, they await your convenience.

134. *your only jig-maker*: as one might say. 'the prince of merry-makers.' Cp. II. ii. 530 ('jig').

136. *within's two hours*, within these two hours.

140. *let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of sables*. Hamlet in this humour delights to talk sense which just escapes being nonsense. If 'a suit of sables' had meant only a suit of black (and so it hits the ear) his sentence would have had no point. But sables, though black, did not necessarily make mourning. They were the highly decorous dress of dignified middle age (see IV. vii. 80). It is as if one were to say: 'let the devil wear black, for I'll have a suit of broadcloth!'

145. *not thinking on*, not being thought of.

146. *For, O! for, O! the hobby-horse is forgot*. The hobby-horse was a figure like our pantomime horse, which took a leading part in the May-games and morris-dances of merry England. 'For, O! for, O!' &c., is

from a ballad well known at that time, probably directed against the Puritans, who did all they could to discourage these rustic games.

148. *miching mallecho*, skulking mischief. To 'miche' was to skulk or play truant; and 'mallecho' may be the Spanish *malhecho*, 'misdeed.' But the form, origin, and meaning of the expression are all uncertain.

150. *the argument of the play*, i.e. its subject or contents, as in II. ii. 380 and I. 245 below.

164. *the posy of a ring*. A 'posy' was a short motto or line of verse inscribed within a ring. It is the same word as 'poesy'.

167. *Phobus' cart*, the chariot of the sun-god. 'Cart' in this sense is archaic.

168. *Neptune's salt wash* is nothing more than the salt sea.

Tellus' orb'd ground is the round earth: the 'orb below' of II. ii. 515. 'Tellus' was the Italian deity of Mother Earth, often called *tellus mater*.

171. *Hymen*, the god of Marriage.

177. *I distrust you*, I am distrustful on your account. Cp. I. iii. 51 ('fear me not').

179. *women's fear and love holds quantity*, women's fear and love hold proportion, are in direct proportion to each other, so that the more women love the more they fear.

For 'quantity' in this sense of 'proportion' cp. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, I. i. 232: 'Things base and vile, holding no quantity, Love can transpose to form and dignity' (i.e. holding no proportion to love's estimation of them).

'Holds' is used, rather than 'hold', because the two members of the subject, 'fear' and 'love', are thought of as moving in unison.

180. *in neither aught, or in extremity*. They neither fear nor love at all, or else they do both to the utmost.

186. *My operant powers their functions leave to do*, my active powers cease to do their functions.

194. *instances*, impelling motives: a sense now almost lost. Cp. *Henry V*, II. ii. 118-19: 'he . . . gave thee no instance why thou shouldst do treason.'

195. *respects of thrift*, mercenary considerations. Cp. I. 67.

201. *validity*, strength, efficacy.

203. *fall unshaken when they mellow be*. 'Fall,' not 'falls', because the subject in the writer's mind was 'fruit' of I. 202 rather than 'purpose' of I. 200.

204. *necessary*, inevitable. So in *Julius Caesar*, II. ii. 36, death is 'a necessary end'.

209. *enactures*, enactments, resolutions.

destroy, not 'destroys', because the subject in the writer's mind was 'grief and joy', not 'the violence' of them.

215. *Wh'er*. Cp. II. ii. 550.

221. *seasons him his enemy*, ripens him into an enemy, brings his native hostility to maturity.

231. *An anchor's cheer in prison be my scope!* An anchor's chair in a cell be the limit of my attainment!

'Anchor' is from OE. *anera*, from Lat. *anachorita* (Gk. ἀναχωρητής), one who retires, a recluse, a hermit: whence 'anchoret' and

'anchorite', which superseded 'anchor'. This is the latest passage in which this sense of 'anchor' has been found.

'Cheer' might mean simply 'fare'. I take it to mean 'chair', in deference to the *New English Dictionary*, which quotes Hall's *Satires*, iv. ii. 103: 'Sit seaven yeares pining in an anchores cheyre'.

232. *Each opposite that blanks the face of joy*, all adverse things that make blank the face of joy. An 'opposite' is an opponent, an adversary (cp. v. ii. 62).

245. *argument*. (cp. I. 150. The King cannot have attended in the least to the dumb show at the beginning.

250. *Tropically*, figuratively: a 'trope' being a figure of speech. The play is a trap 'to catch the conscience of the King' (II. ii. 642). The early imperfect edition of 1603 reads 'trapically', so that a pun was probably intended.

255. *free*. See II. ii. 598.

256. *let the galled jade wince, our withers are unwrung*. A 'jade' is a poor nag, a 'screw'. A horse is 'galled' by the rubbing of the saddle and its withers (the part between the shoulders) are 'wrung' by the pinching or pressure of it.

259. *chorus*. The chorus explained the action beforehand. It was a regular part of the older drama, and appears in several of Shakespeare's plays, e.g. in *Henry V*, where it precedes each Act as a kind of prologue.

269. *the croaking raven doth bellow for revenge*. This is a reminiscence of two lines in *The True Tragedie of Richard III*, published anonymously in 1594: 'The screeking raven sits croking for revenge, Whole heads of beasts comes bellowing for revenge.'

271. *Confederate season*, conspiring moment.

273. *Hecate* (pronounced 'Hecat') was a goddess of the underworld. Witches were supposed to celebrate her rites and make her offerings. She is the mistress of the witches in *Macbeth*.

275. *wholesome, healthy*. So I. v. 70, III. iv. 65.

usurp, encroach,

282. *frighted with false fire*: in modern phrase, 'frightened with blank cartridge.'

287. *let the stricken deer go weep*. Read the description in *As You Like It*, II. i. 33 f.

291. *a forest of feathers*, a fine plume of feathers such as actors loved to wear. The unambitious scenery of the Elizabethan stage was compensated by the magnificence of the costumes, which far surpassed those of any other theatre in Europe.

292. *turn Turk*, i.e. change right about (as of one changing from Christian to infidel).

Provincial roses means 'Provençal roses', roses of Provence. This was a popular mistake for 'roses of Provins', a town in North-East France where roses were much cultivated.

The roses were cut out in the leather, 'razed shoes' being shoes slashed or streaked in patterns (from 'raze' or 'rase', to cut, scrape: Fr. *raser*). Cp. 'Pinked or raised shooes have the over leathers grain part cut into Roses or other devices' (Holme, *Armoury*, 1688: quoted N.E.D.).

293. *a fellowship in a cry of players*, a partnership in a company of players. A 'cry' was the term for a 'pack' of hounds.

296. *A whole one, I.* There were three grades of actors: (1) Those who were 'sharers' in the company: these got the main part of the profits; (2) The crowd of ordinary players, not yet 'sharers', but with an interest in the profits; (3) the 'hiringlings' or lowest grade, paid a fixed salary at labourer's rates.

300. *pajock*. The earlier editions give 'paiocke', which no one can explain. 'Pajock' may be (1) dialect for 'peacock'; or (2) it may be for 'patchcock', a word used by Spenser to mean a base fellow, a ragamuffin. If Hamlet had rimed, the word would have been 'ass'.

308. *recorders*, a kind of flute or flageolet.

310. *perdy* is an old oath, meaning 'by God!' (OFr. *par dé*, mod. *pardi*, for *par Dieu*). By Shakespeare's time it was rather comically archaic.

317. *distempered*, disordered, upset: referring to his state of mind.

320. *choler* means anger. The King was very angry. It also meant bile, and this was why Guildenstern used it. If you must have it that his disorder is physical, he says, then it's not drink but bile that's the matter. Hamlet keeps this up in his reply.

321. *should*, for 'would'.

322-3. He plays on two senses of 'purgation': (1) for me to put him to purging himself of his bile; (2) for me to put him to exculpating himself, to clearing himself of crime.

326. *into some frame*, into some shape or order.

335. *wholesome*, sound.

346. *amazement and admiration*, bewilderment and wonder.

350. *closet*. Cp. II. i. 77.

355. *by these pickers and stealers*, i.e. by these hands. He holds them out. 'By this hand!' was a common oath. His phrase was suggested by the sentence in the Church of England Catechism: 'To keep my hands from picking and stealing.'

356-7. *your cause of distemper*, the cause of your distemper. Cp. I. iv. 73.

364. *your succession in Denmark*. Cp. I. ii. 108 f.

365-6. 'While the grass grows,' &c. The whole proverb is, 'While the grass grows the steed starves.'

367-8. *To withdraw with you*, &c., To step aside with you for a moment (he addresses Guildenstern and moves a little away from the players), why do you go about, &c.

368-9. *recover the wind of me, as if you would drive me into a toil*. To 'recover the wind' of a stag is to 'get the wind of it', to get between it and the wind so that it starts and breaks in the direction of the toil or net. Hamlet means: Why do you keep working round me with your questions, as if you would drive me into a trap?

379-1. *O! my lord, if my duty be too bold, my love is too unmannerly*. He means that, since duty and love in him are one, if he is too bold in duty he must be too forward in love. This is a frightened way of saying that any excess of duty of which Hamlet may find him guilty should be put down to excess of love.

380. *ventages*, air-holes.

396. *though you can fret me, you cannot play upon me.* He puns on the ordinary and the musical sense of 'fret'. You can chafe me to irritation, he says; you can put 'frets' on me (i.e. bars on the finger-board to regulate the fingering); you can, in short, do everything but play upon me.

407. *by and by*, immediately.

408. *to the top of my bent*, to the full stretch of my inclination. 'Bent' means literally the extent to which a bow may be 'bent', its degree of tension. In *Twelfth Night*, II. iv. 37, to 'hold the bent' means to keep up tension.

419. *The soul of Nero.* The emperor Nero had his mother Agrippina put to death.

423. *shent*, rebuked, reviled.

424. *To give them seals*, to seal them with action, with the dagger.

ACT III, SCENE III. 5. *The terms of our estate*, the conditions of my position as king.

11. *The single and peculiar life*, the life which stands alone, whose single concern is itself; that is, the life of the private person. 'Peculiar' has its original sense of what is particular or proper to an individual (Lat. *peculiaris*, fr. *peculium*, personal property).

13. *noyance*, harm: stronger than the modern 'annoyance.' (cp. *Macbeth*, v. i. 83 (the doctor about Lady Macbeth, fearing suicide): 'Remove from her the means of all annoyance.')

15. *The cease of majesty*, majesty, when it ceases to be; a king, when he dies.

16. *gulf*, whirlpool.

20. *mortis'd*, socketed. A 'mortise' is a socket for fastening one piece of wood to another.

29. *tax him home*, take him to task and drive it home.

33. *of vantage*, from a position of vantage (here, from behind the hangings).

37. *It hath the primal eldest curse upon 't.* He thinks of Cain and Abel.

47. *to confront the visage of offence*, to oppose sin like a champion, face to face.

49. *To be forestalled*, to be caught in time.

56. *retain the offence*, i.e. retain the proceeds of it.

59-60. *the wicked prize itself Buys out the law*, the bench is bribed with a share of the spoil.

61-2. *there the action lies In his true nature*, there the action is laid before the court in its true nature. 'Lies' has its legal sense. 'His' for 'its' is usual; 'its' did not come in till later.

62. *compell'd*, i.e. are compelled. For this ellipse, natural in compressed speech, cp. I. ii. 90, &c.

64. *give in* goes together.

rests, remains.

68. *limed*, caught, as with bird-lime.

69. *more engaged*, more entangled than ever.

75. *That would be scann'd*, that demands to be closely examined.

79. *this is hire and salary, not revenge*, this is the action of a hired assassin, not of a revenger.

80. *grossly*, when he was gross and unpurged. See I. 85. With the whole line cp. Ezek. xvi. 49: 'Pride, fulness of bread, and abundance of idleness.'

81. *flush*. Cp. I. v. 76 (the Ghost): 'Cut off even in the blossoms of my sin.' Hamlet uses the same metaphor as his father. 'Flush' means prime, lusty, full of sap and vigour.

83-4. *in our circumstance and course of thought 'Tis heavy with him*, as we human beings look at facts and make up our minds about them, there is a heavy balance against him. The 'circumstance of thought' is the detail of facts to be considered.

88. *hent* means literally 'clutch', 'grasp'. It comes from the verb to 'hent', meaning to seize or occupy, which occurs twice in Shakespeare. It could also mean 'intent', 'design' (as it were, that which is grasped in the mind). For example: 'They put the consull out of his hent' (Philemon Holland's *Liuy*, 1600, where 'hent' is a translation of *consilia*: quoted *N.E.D.*). Either meaning might do here.

ACT III, SCENE IV. 1. *lay home to him*. Cp. III. iii. 29.

2. *too broad, too open and unrestrained*.

4. *between Much heat and him*, between him and much hot resentment.

11. *with an idle tongue*. In the version of this interview in the early edition of 1603, when the Queen says, 'forget these idle fits,' Hamlet replies, 'Idle, no mother, my pulse doth beat like yours. It is not madness that possesseth Hamlet.' That is, 'idle' might mean crazy. It does perhaps mean 'crazy' in III. ii. 95. Here, however, the meaning seems to be milder.

14. *by the rood*, by the Cross (OE. *rôd*, cross, crucifix).

32. *thy better*, i.e. the King.

38. *proof and bulwark against sense*, armoured and fortified against feeling.

44. *sets a blister there*, brands it, as the brows of harlots were branded.

46. *contraction* means marriage contraction.

48. *A rhapsody of words*, a mere 'string' of words. 'Rhapsody' means literally the stitching or stringing of songs together (Gk. *ῥαψῳδία* from *ῥάπτειν*, to stitch, and *ὥδή*, song).

49. *this solidity and compound mass*, i.e. the earth.

50. *tristful*, sorrowful.

as against the doom, as if doomsday were at hand. This sense of 'doom' has survived in the well-known phrase from *Macbeth* (IV. i. 117), 'the crack of doom.'

52. *in the index*. 'Index' meant a preliminary table of contents: also a preface or prologue. Here probably the latter.

53. He points to two portraits hanging on the wall.

54. *The counterfeit presentment*, the presentment in portraiture. Cp. *Merchant of Venice*, III. ii. 115: 'Portia's counterfeit' (i.e. a picture of Portia).

56. *Hyperion*. Cp. I. ii. 140 n.

58. *A station like the herald Mercury*, a stance or poise of body like the god Mercury, who was herald and messenger to the gods of Olympus. He had wings on his heels and his helmet.

71-3. *Sense, sure, you have*, &c., you can move, he says, therefore

I must grant that you have senses, for motion implies sensation. But surely those senses are paralysed.

73. *would not err*, would not err so.

74. *ecstasy*. Cp. III. i. 169.

75. *quantity*, portion or proportion. Cp. III. ii. 179.

77. *cozen'd you at hoodman-blind*, cheated you at blind-man's buff.

79. *sans*. The French word *sans*, 'without,' was at this time used freely almost like an English word.

81. *Could not so mope*, could not be sunk so deep in stupor.

83. *mutine*. To 'mutine' occurs only here in Shakespeare; but we have 'mutine' = mutineer in v. ii. 6.

88. *reason panders will*, reason itself seduces the will.

90. *such . . . grained spots As will not leave their tinct* means dyed in grain, so that they could not come out.

98. *a vice of kings*, a clown among kings. The 'vice' was the leading buffoon in the old moral plays called Interludes. Cp. *Twelfth Night*, IV. ii. 139 f.: 'Like to the old Vice . . . Who with dagger of lath. In his rage and his wrath, Cries, Ah, ah! to the devil.'

102. *A king of shreds and patches*, a patchwork king. 'Patch' also meant a clown (either from his patchwork motley dress, or, perhaps, from Ital. *pazzo*, a fool), and this sense was present in the writer's mind, recalling his 'vice of kings' of l. 98.

107. *laps'd in time and passion*, sunk in passion and blind to the lapse of time.

108. *important*, urgent. Cp. *Much Ado About Nothing*, II. i. 74: 'If the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything' (i.e. too urgent, too importunate).

113. *Conceit*, fancy, imagination.

117. *incorporal*, incorporeal.

119-21. *as the sleeping soldiers*, &c. like sleeping soldiers when the alarm is sounded, your hair, at rest like them, starts up and stands on end, as if, though a mere outgrowth and no part of the body, it had a life of its own.

'Bedded' carries on the figure of 'sleeping'. For 'excrement' cp. *Winter's Tale*, IV. iv. 736: '*Autolycus*. Let me pocket up my pedlar's excrement. [*Takes off his false beard*].' The word means strictly an 'outgrowth' (Lat. *ex*, out, and *crescere*, to grow), and was commonly used of the hair and nails.

126. *capable*, i.e. capable of feeling. Cp. IV. vii. 179.

127-8. *convert My stern effects*, change the stern working of my resolves.

134. *in his habit as he liv'd*, in his ordinary dress. The Ghost is no longer in armour, as on his first appearance.

137. *ecstasy*. Cp. III. i. 169.

143. *re-word*, repeat word for word.

145. *unction*, ointment.

147. *skin and film the ulcerous place*, i.e. put a skin and film over it.

151. *compost*, manure.

153. *the fatness of these pursy times*. To be 'pursy' is to be short-winded: a malady most incident to the fat.

155. *curb*, bow, bend (Fr. *courber*).

161-5. *That monster, custom, . . . put on*. That monster, custom, who eats up all natural feeling in us, and is indeed a very devil in hardening

men to bad habits, is yet an angel in this, that if our actions are good actions he can make them also a habit, and one that can readily be put on. 'Frock or lining' (l. 164) was suggested by the other sense of 'habit', viz., dress. We had it in l. 134.

169. *And master ev'n the devil.* Most early editions read, 'And either the devil.' One reads, 'And master the devil.' Pope suggested, 'And master ev'n the devil', which does well enough.

171. *when you are desirous to be bless'd,* when you can repent and pray for heaven's blessing.

175. *their scourge and minister.* 'Their' because 'heaven' is regarded as a plural; as it were, 'the powers of heaven.' Cp. *Richard II*, i. ii. 6: 'Put we our quarrel to the will of heaven, Who, when they see the hours ripe on earth,' &c.

176. *bestow him,* put him somewhere.

182. *bloat,* bloated.

183. *mouse:* a common term of endearment, like 'puss'.

184. *reechy* is a form of 'reeky', which means smoky. So, squalid, filthy, stinking. In *Coriolanus*, II. i. 228, we read of the 'reechy neck' of a slut.

190. *paddock,* toad.

gib, tom-cat; a short pet name for Gilbert.

191. *Such dear concernings,* things that concern him so nearly.

194-6. *like the famous ape,* &c. This fable has never been found. The ape, being curious to see if he also could fly, to test the matter and see what would happen ('to try conclusions'), got into the basket, jumped from the housetop, and broke his neck.

199. *I must to England: you know that?* How did Hamlet know this? In iv. iii. 49 he expresses surprise at the news.

206-7. *'tis the sport to have the engineer Hoist with his own petar,* 'tis the right sort of sport ('the' sport) to have the engineer (cp. 'pioneer', i. v. 163) blown into the air ('hoist,' p. part. of 'hoise', an older form of 'hoist') with his own bomb ('petar' or 'petard', a new kind of bomb for bursting open gates, &c.).

211. *shall set me packing.* There are two meanings here: (1) shall set me off in a hurry; (2) shall set me plotting (to 'pack' was to practice collusion, to plot). Hamlet intends both.

212. *the neighbour room,* the neighbouring room. Cp. *As You Like It*, iv. iii. 80: 'the neighbour bottom' (i.e. the neighbouring dell).

ACT IV, SCENE I. 10. *Whips out his rapier,* i.e. 'he whips out his rapier'. Cp. III. i. 8.

13. *us . . . we.* This is the royal plural. So l. 15, &c.

18. *kept short,* i.e. tethered.

out of haunt, out of the haunts of men.

25. *some ore,* some vein of gold or precious metal.

26. *mineral,* mine.

40. *so, haply, slander.* These words have been supplied by editors to fill up a blank in the line.

42. *to his blank,* to its mark. The 'blank' was the white centre of the target (Fr. *blanc*, white). 'His' for 'its' as usual.

44. *woundless,* i.e. invulnerable. Cp. I. i. 145.

ACT IV, SCENE II. 12. *of a sponge*, by a sponge.

replication, reply.

16. *countenance*, favour.

19. *like an ape*. 'As an ape doth nuts', says the 1603 edition, which is the meaning here.

30-1. *The body . . . the body*. Whether this is disguised sense or intentional nonsense it is impossible to say.

33-4. *Hide fox, and all after*. Probably a cry in some children's game, like 'Hide-and-seek'.

ACT IV, SCENE III. 9. *Deliberate pause*, a deliberate step, taken after hesitation.

25. *is but variable service*, is only serving up a variety of dishes. 'Is' is used instead of 'are' because the king and the beggar make one idea: because they are all one, equally food for the worms. For 'your' in this passage cp. III. ii. 134; V. i. 187-8. It indicated, almost like a wave of the hand, that of course the thing was known and common.

34. *go a progress*. A 'progress' was the word for a journey of state.

44. *tender*, care dearly for. Cp. I. iii. 107-9.

dearly, heartily.

47. *the wind at help*, i.e. favourable.

48. *The associates tend*, your companions wait.

56. *at foot*, at heel.

59-60. *everything . . . That else leans on the affair*, everything else that has to do with the affair.

63. *cicatrice*, scar.

64-5. *thy free awe Pays homage to us*. The Danes had overrun England and imposed a tribute, which, however, had been allowed to lapse (cp. III. i. 178-9). Even so, though free once more, the English still stood in awe of the Danes, and paid homage to their king.

65-6. *coldly set Our sovereign process*, be chilly in your estimation of my sovereign procedure. To 'set' is to put a value on, as in I. iv. 65.

68. *present*, immediate.

69. *like the hectic*. A 'hectic' is a chronic fever.

ACT IV, SCENE IV. 2-4. For this promise see II. ii. 76 f.

6. *in his eye*, in his presence.

8. *softly*, gently.

9. *powers*, forces: the usual word.

14. *The nephew to old Norway, Fortinbras*. Cp. I. ii. 17-30.

15. *the main of Poland* must mean the main body of the country, Poland as a whole.

20. *To pay five ducats, five, I would not farm it*, I would not take the lease of it for a rent of no more than five ducats. For 'farm' in the sense of to rent or lease, cp. *Richard II*, I. iv. 45: 'We are enforced to farm our royal realm.'

22. *ranker*, richer, more abundant.

sold in fee, sold in fee-simple, which gave the buyer absolute possession.

27. *imposthume*, internal abscess.

34. *market of his time* is 'that for which he sells his time' (Johnson).

36. *such large discourse*, such range of intellect. See I. ii. 150 n. ('discourse of reason').

39. *fust*, grow fusty.

whē'r is 'whether', spelt as pronounced.

40-1. *some craven scruple . . . on the event*, some craven scruple that comes from thinking too precisely on what will happen.

45. *Sith*, since. So IV. vii. 3.

46. *gross as earth*, i.e. large and obvious. 'Gross' has here its original sense of mere bigness (Fr. *gros*).

47. *charge*, cost.

48. *delicate and tender*, delicately nurtured and still in his tender youth.

50. *makes mouths*, mocks, grimaces.

54. *great argument*, great occasion. (Cp. *Henry V*, III. i. 21 : 'sheath'd their swords for lack of argument' (i.e. of matter to fight about) 'Not' goes with 'to stir'. 'Not to stir' is the subject of 'is'.

55-6. *But greatly to find quarrel, &c.* But where honour is at stake, which is the greatest of all 'arguments', true greatness will think nothing too trifling, no punctilio too small, to quarrel about, since it concerns that honour.

61. *for a fantasy and trick of fame*, led on by a vision of fame which is a mere fantasy that tricks the senses.

62. *a plot*, a plot of ground.

63-5. *Whereon the numbers . . . hide the slain*, which is too small to give the contending parties standing room, too small even to bury the dead in, to hold their bodies. 'Continent' is simply that which holds or contains : the original sense.

ACT IV, SCENE V. 2. *distract*. Cp. III. i. 164 ('deject').

6. *enviously*, viciously.

7-9. *Her speech . . . collection*. Her speech has no sense, yet its very disjointedness leads people to put it together and draw conclusions from it.

11-13. He is afraid to commit himself by saying plainly that Ophelia's words and manner gave one the impression that some great unhappiness had befallen her.

18. *Each toy seems prologue to some great amiss*, each trifle seems prelude to some great disaster.

19. *artless jealousy*. 'Jealousy' means suspicion (cp. Fr. *jalouser*, and Scots 'jalouse'). 'Artless jealousy' is suspicion that has not the art to conceal itself.

25-6. *By his cockle hat and staff And his sandal shoon*. This was the dress of a pilgrim. A 'cockle-hat' was a hat with a cockle or scallop-shell stuck in it, as a sign that the pilgrim had been at the famous shrine of St. James of Compostella in Spain.

29-32. This and the preceding verse were worked into a ballad, 'The Friar of Orders Gray,' by Bishop Percy in his *Reliques*.

38. *Larded*, garnished. Cp. v. ii. 20.

42. *God 'ild you !* God yield you ! i.e. God reward you !

42-3. *They say the owl was a baker's daughter*. 'Douce relates a story told by the common people in Gloucestershire, how that our Saviour, asking for bread, was churlishly refused by a baker's daughter, whom

in punishment he transformed into an owl' (Clark and Wright). The reflection that Ophelia goes on to make is in keeping with this.

46. *Conceit upon her father*, i.e. thinking upon her father has done this. For 'conceit' cp. II. ii. 587, 591.

81. *remove*, removal. Cp. I. i. 57 n.

81-3. *the people muddied*, &c., like a pool which has been stirred up and the mud brought to the top.

83. *greenly*, rawly, foolishly.

84. *In hugger-mugger*, i.e. in secrecy. This expressive word is still in colloquial use. Its origin is doubtful.

89. *keeps himself in clouds*, shrouds himself in gloomy mystery.

92-4. *wher'in necessity . . . in ear and ear*. These buzzers of pestilent speeches, says the King, being beggared for matter and therefore forced to invent, will not scruple to whisper accusations of myself in every ear they meet.

95. *a murdering-piece* was a small cannon loaded with case-shot (i.e. stones, bullets, nails, scrap-iron, in a case) which scattered when fired. It was also called a 'murderer'.

97. *my Switzers*, my bodyguard. The Swiss succeeded the Scots as the leading mercenaries of Europe. The French king's Scottish archers (of whom Quentin Durward was one) were succeeded by the Swiss Guard, which lasted until the Revolution. The Pope's bodyguard to-day is Swiss.

99. *overpeering of his list*, lifting his head over his barrier (i.e. over the edge of the flat shore-lands). For 'list' cp. *Henry V*, v. ii. 292: 'Dear Kate, you and I cannot be confined within the weak list of a country's fashion.' It is better known in this sense in the plural. 'Lists' was the name for the enclosed or barriered ground where tournaments were held.

101. *in a riotous head*. A 'head' is a force raised, especially in insurrection. Cp. I *Henry IV*, I. iii. 284: 'To save our heads by raising of a head.' 'In' = with, by, as in *Coriolanus*, I. x. 14: 'to crush him in an equal force.'

103. *as*, as if.

105. *The ratifiers and props of every word*. This is to be taken with 'They' of l. 106. The rabble, disregarding all old rights and customs, take everything upon themselves, and ratify and support every word that is spoken.

110. *O! this is counter, you false Danish dogs!* the misled rabble give cry upon the wrong scent, and like false hounds run 'counter'. Dogs were said to 'run counter' when they ran back the way they had come, taking the old scent for the new.

122. *do not fear our person*. Cp. I. iii. 51 ('fear').

124-5. *it . . . his*. 'It' with its possessive 'his' are here shown together. 'Its' did not come in till later.

133. *both the worlds*: this world and the next. Cp. *Macbeth*, III. ii. 16: 'But let the frame of things disjoint, both the worlds suffer, Ere we will eat our meal in fear.'

135. *thoroughly*, thoroughly.

140-2. Is it the scheme of your revenge, he asks, to make no distinction of friend and foe, but sweep all indiscriminately into your net?

In a 'swoopstake' or 'sweepstake' there is no distinction of friend and foe. There is one winner who 'draws' all stakes, including his own (the 'winner's', as well as the 'loser's').

145. *the kind life-rendering pelican*. It was believed that the pelican fed its young with its own blood. Cp. *Richard II*, II. i. 126.

149. *sensibly, feelingly*.

150. *level*. Cp. IV. i. 42.

154. *virtue, power*.

160. *Nature is fine in love, i. e. fine-run, delicate*.

161. *instance, proof, example*. The precious instance of her love which Ophelia sent after her father was her sanity.

171. *O how the wheel becomes it!* This has never been satisfactorily explained. Since Ophelia is crazed perhaps no rational explanation is to be sought. Steevens thought that 'wheel' meant burden or refrain (the 'a-down-a' of the song); but this seems to have been a guess. Malone took it to mean spinning-wheel, as if Ophelia had thought of a girl spinning and singing this song to the whirr of her wheel.

171-2. *the false steward that stole his master's daughter*. This is some story now forgotten.

173. *This nothing's more than matter*, this nonsense has more meaning in it than any sense.

174-6. She speaks the language of flowers, addressing Laertes. 'Rosemary' had the meaning of our 'forget-me-not', and 'pansies' were literally 'thoughts' (Fr. *pensées*).

177. *A document in madness*. 'Document' has here its original sense of precept, instruction (Lat. *docere*, to teach).

179. *There's fennel for you and columbines*: these to the King. 'Fennel' was for flattery, and 'columbines' for faithlessness.

180-1. *there's rue for you, &c.* She gives rue to the Queen; it was for repentance. Hence its other name, 'herb of grace' (i. e. grace of repentance). A good Sunday name for it, she says. Cp. *Richard II*, III. iv. 104-7: 'Here did she fall a tear; here, in this place, I'll set a bank of rue, some herb of grace.'

181-2. *you must wear your rue with a difference*. 'Difference' is a heraldic term meaning 'an alteration of or addition to a coat of arms to distinguish a junior member or branch of a family from the chief line' (N.E.D.). An audience understood at once that the 'difference' was to indicate that the Queen and she had different causes to rue. The Queen had other reasons for repentance, unconnected with Ophelia altogether.

182. *There's a daisy*. The daisy was for deceit. She probably gives it to the Queen.

183. *violets*. Violets were for faithfulness. They were fittingly absent from such a company.

187. *Thought*. Cp. III. i. 85.

199. *of all Christian souls*. 'Of' means 'on'; a common use.

202. *I must commune with your grief*, I must share in it, partake of it. 'Commune' is a modernization. The original has 'common', which I should prefer.

204. *of whom your wisest friends you will*, of whom you will of your wisest friends.

207. *touch'd*, implicated. But was not Hamlet's a collateral hand ?

213. *His means of death*, the means of his death.

obscure. Accent 'ôbscure'.

214. *hatchment* : the escutcheon or coat of arms hung over the tomb of a dead knight.

formal ostentation, customary display. 'Formal' means according to recognized form or rule, normal.

217. *That*, so that.

ACT IV, SCENE VI. 27. *much too light for the bore of the matter*, much too slight to give the full momentousness of his news ; like small shot in a gun of large bore or calibre.

ACT IV, SCENE VII. 3. *Sith*. Cp. IV. iv. 45.

4. *which* could be used of all genders.

6. *feats*, deeds (Fr. *fait*, Lat. *factum*).

10. *unsinew'd*, nerveless, weak.

13. *be it either which* ; a mixture of 'be it either' and 'be it which-ever'.

14. *so conjunctive to my life and soul*, so closely united to them. This suggested the image of the star in the next line. Planets were said to be 'in conjunction' when they moved in proximity to each other.

17. *to a public count*, to a public action at law. The 'count' is strictly the declaration of the plaintiff.

18. *the general gender*, 'the common sort' of people. 'Gender' has its original sense of kind, class (Lat. *genus*).

20-1. *Would . . . convert his gyves to graces*, would like him all the better for his fetters. The 'spring' of l. 20 comes from popular natural history. Lyly speaks of 'that ryver in Caria, which turneth those that drinke of it to stones' (*Euphuës*, quoted by Clark and Wright).

Of the simile Johnson writes with his usual good sense. 'It is,' he says, 'neither very seasonable in the deep interest of this conversation, nor very accurately applied. If the spring had changed base metals to gold, the thought had been more proper.'

26. *terms*. We should say 'conditions'.

27. *if praises may go back again*, if I may praise what she was, not what she is.

28-9. *Stood challenger . . . perfections*, stood high above the age and challenged it to match her perfections.

32. *let our beard be shook with danger*, let danger pluck us by the beard. 'With' means 'by'.

35. *I hope*. When he drops the royal 'we' and uses 'I' he means to show personal attachment.

44. *naked*, destitute.

50. *abuse*, cheat, deception.

51. *character*, handwriting.

58. *As how should it be so ? how otherwise ?* He cannot see how it is possible, and yet he is bound to admit, on the evidence of the letter, that it is so.

62. *checking at his voyage*, i. e. giving it up for something else. A hawk was said to 'check' when she forsook the game she was flown at to pursue some other.

67. *uncharge the practice*, make no charge against our stratagem. The bad sense of 'practice', as something underhand, is common in Shakespeare, and was the earliest sense of the word.

70. *organ*, instrument.

76. *Of the unworthingest siege*, that sits lowest of all, the least noble. 'Siege' meant 'seat' (Fr. *siège*), and so place, rank, since people sat down in order of precedence. Cp. *Othello*, i. ii. 22: 'I fetch my life and being from men of royal siege.'

80. *his sables and his weeds*. On 'sables', cp. III. ii. 140 n. 'Weeds', meaning dress (OE. *wad*), is used because it is archaic and suggestive of stateliness.

81. *health* here means well-being, as in I. iv. 40.

84. *they can well on horseback*, they are very cunning horsemen. 'Can' has its original sense of 'to know', 'to be able' (OE. *cunnan*).

87-8. *As he had been incorp'sd and demi-natur'd With the brave beast*, as if he had been one with it in body, and half in mind as well. 'Incorp'sd' = incorporated.

89-90. His figures and tricks went beyond all that my imagination could invent.

93. *the brooch*, i. e. the most conspicuous ornament. Brooches were at one time fashionable ornaments in men's hats. Cf. *Richard II*, v. v. 65-6: 'love to Richard Is a strange brooch in this all-hating world' (i. e. a strange article of fashion).

95-7. *He made confession of you, &c.*, he confessed your skill, and reported you to be such a master in the art and practice of fence, &c.

100. *scrimers, fencers* (Fr. *escrimeurs*).

101. *motion*, action: a fencing term. People spoke of a fencer's 'motion' as we speak of a bowler's 'action'. Cp. I. 157.

105. *to play with him*, to have some swordplay with him.

111-13. The sense is this: that as love is not born at once but comes with time, so time abates it. 'Passages of proof' means 'occurrences that prove what I say'.

116. *still*, for ever.

117. *plurisy, plethora, excess*. So frequently at this time, as if from Lat. *plus, plur-is*, 'more'; properly a disease of the *pleura*, one of the membranes of the lungs.

122-3. *this 'should' is like a spendthrift sigh, That hurts by casing*. The pricking of conscience, without the will to act, soothes our self-respect at the expense of our virility. It is mere waste, like our sighs, which drain the blood from the heart. For this old belief cp. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, III. ii. 97: 'sighs of love, that cost the fresh blood dear.'

127. *No place, indeed, should murder sanctuarize*, no place should give sanctuary to a murderer (here, to Hamlet).

134. *remiss, careless* (with no definite idea of blame).

136. *peruse the foils*, i. e. inspect them.

138. *unbated, unblunted*, with no button on the point.

a pass of practise, a treacherous thrust. Cp. I. 67 n.

141. *an unction of a mountebank*, an ointment from a quack-doctor. This was the original meaning of mountebank, from Ital. *montambanco*, a 'mount-on-bench', the bench being the platform from which the travelling quack addressed his audience.

143. *cataplasma*, plaster.

144. *all simples that have virtue*, all herbs that have the virtue of healing. A single ingredient in a compound, especially in a compounded medicine, was called a 'simple'. It generally meant a medicinal herb.

146. *withal*, therewith.

150. *fit us to our shape*, i. e. to the 'figure' or part we have to play. Cp. l. 151.

154. *blast in proof*, explode and burst in the trial. The metaphor is from the bursting of a cannon when under trial.

155. *your connings*, your respective abilities.

157. *motion*. Cp. l. 101 n.

160. *for the nonce*, for the occasion.

161. *stuck*, thrust; also spelt 'stock'. The word is a corruption of Ital. *stoccata*.

170. *crow-flowers*, ragged robins.

long purples, the purple orchis.

171. *liberal*, free-spoken.

174. *sliver*. A 'sliver' is a branch 'slivered' or stripped off.

179. *incapable*, insensible. Cp. III. iv. 126 ('capable').

180-1. *native and indu'd Unto that element*, native to it and endowed by nature for life in the water. Shakespeare commonly uses 'indue' with the sense of 'endow'.

183. *the poor wretch*. Cp. II. ii. 168 n.

189-90. *when these are gone The woman will be out*, when these few drops are gone I shall weep outright. Tears are 'the woman' in us. We inherit them from our mothers. Cp. Sebastian on a similar occasion in *Twelfth-Night*, II. i. 43-4: 'I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more mine eyes will tell tales of me.'

192. *this folly douts it*, these foolish tears put it out. 'Dout' = do out, i. e. extinguish.

ACT V, SCENE I. 5. *straight*, straightway.

5-6. *the crowner . . . Christian burial*. The finding of the coroner was that she should not be treated as a suicide, but should have ordinary Christian burial.

10. *se offendendo*: for *se defendendo*, in self defence!

13. *argal*: for *ergo*, therefore.

24. *coroner's quest law*, coroner's inquest law. First Clown's arguments are a parody of real life. It sounds incredible, but just such arguments were used by learned counsel in at least one recorded case in Elizabeth's reign.

29. *there thou sayest*, there you're right.

31. *their even Christian*, their fellow Christian. This is an old use of 'even', from its sense of being on a level with.

34-5. *they hold up Adam's profession*. That is, they keep it going.

42-3. *confess thyself—Go to*. 'Confess thyself and be hanged', he was going to say. 'Get away with you,' says Second Clown, knowing the proverb, and therefore cutting him short.

57. *unyoke* is as much as to say, 'consider your day's work done.'

60. *Mass*. He swears, first by the Virgin (l. 58), and then by the Mass.

66. *Yaughan* was very possibly the name of an alehouse-keeper near the Globe Theatre. The audience would know it and be delighted by the local touch.

67-70. *In youth, when I did love, did love, &c.* This and the two other stanzas are a jumbled version of part of a song entitled *The Aged Lover Renounceth Love*, in the popular anthology called *Tottel's Miscellany* (1557). The gravedigger makes very fair nonsense of it, partly by introducing bits of lines from other stanzas.

73. *Custom hath made it in him a property of easiness*, custom has made it easy to him, a sort of second nature. 'Property' means something particular and characteristic.

79. *intil*, into.

82. *jowls*, bumps.

83. *Cain's jaw-bone*. There was a legend that Cain killed Abel with the jawbone of an ass.

85. *a politician*, a schemer, an intriguer. This was a regular early meaning of the word. In Shakespeare it has no other.

o'er-offices, lords it over by virtue of his office. The word was coined by Shakespeare for the occasion.

96. *chapless*, jawless.

mazzard was a jocular term for the head. It meant the 'goblet'.

98-9. *to play at loggats with 'em*, to throw them about like loggats. A 'loggat' was a spherical mass of wood, with a handle. In the game of 'loggats' the players threw their pieces of wood at a stake fixed in the ground, the nearest to the stake being the winner.

101. *For an't*, and moreover. The original reads 'And eke'.

105. *quiddities*, fine-drawn distinctions. 'Quiddity' comes from *quidditas* (the *quid* or 'what' of a thing, its real essence), which was the subject of much over-subtle argument among the scholastic philosophers of the Middle Ages.

106. *quillits*, quirks and quibbles. The word is probably a short form of 'quillity' = quiddity, on which we have just commented.

109. *sconce*. Another cheerful word for 'the head'.

111. *statutes, recognizances*, were bonds of various kinds.

112. *his fines, his double vouchers, his recoveries*. All that the reader need know is that these are legal terms and relate to the tenure of land.

113-15. *is this the fine of his fines . . . fine dirt?* Is this the finish (the 'finis', the end) of his fines . . . to have his fine-distinguishing head full of fine dirt?

117. *a pair of indentures*. All indentures went in 'pairs'. An indenture was an agreement written in duplicate on the same sheet. The sheet was divided along an 'indented' or crooked line, and half given to either party, the test of genuineness being that the duplicates should fit together.

119. *The very conveyance of his lands will hardly lie in this box*, the very deeds conveying his lands to him are almost too bulky to lie in this box of a grave.

120. *inheritor*, possessor. To 'inherit' in Shakespeare generally means to possess.

125. *assurance*. He plays on the legal and the ordinary sense of 'assurance': (1) conveyance of property by deed; (2) security.

136. *the quick, the living* (OE. *cwīc*, alive). Cp. II. 273, 301.

148. *absolute*, positive, dogmatic.

148-9. *we must speak by the card, or equivocation will undo us*, we must speak with precision and steer clear of ambiguity, or we shall be undone. 'Card' may mean compass-card (as in *Macbeth*, I. iii. 17: 'All the quarters . . . i' the shipman's card'), or it may mean chart (as in v. ii. 114 below). To 'sail by the card' in either sense was to sail with care and precision.

151. *picked*, fine and spruce.

152. *kibe*, chilblain on the heel. Democracy, it seems, was picking up.

169. *there the men are as mad as he*. That the English are mostly mad was and is the private belief of most other nations.

176. *thirty years*. Hamlet, then, was thirty years of age.

181. *will last you nine year*. This colloquial 'you', here and in l. 189, gives a familiar directness to what is said by bringing it home to the person addressed. It has something of the force of 'd'ye see?' Cp. the similar use of 'your' below.

186-7. *your water . . . your dead body*. For 'your' cp. IV. iii. 25 n.

214. *favour*, appearance.

229-30, *to follow him thither . . . to lead it*. It is quite a modest reasonable inquiry, he says, on the lines of probability.

235. *Imperious*, imperial.

238. *flaw*, blast, gust of wind.

241. *maimed*, i.e. imperfect, curtailed.

243. *Fordo*, destroy. So II. i. 103.

estate, rank.

244. *Couch we awhile*, let us hide for a moment.

249. *warrantise*, warranty.

250. *but that great command o'ersways the order*, had not the King compelled us to override the rule of the Church which forbids Christian burial to suicides.

254. *Shards*, potsherds, pieces of broken earthenware.

255. *crants*, wreath (German *kranz*): a strange word which came in for a little about the end of the sixteenth century. A 'crantz' was made usually of white paper, and was hung up in church when a young girl died.

256. *strewments*, i.e. the strewing of flowers upon her.

the bringing home Of bell and burial, the bringing of her to her long home with bell and burial.

260. *peace-parted souls*, souls that have departed in peace.

270. *ingenious*, quick to apprehend.

275-6. *Pelion . . . Olympus*. Pelion, Ossa, and Olympus are mountains in Thessaly, regarded by the ancients as types of loftiness in mountains. To 'pile Pelion on Ossa' was a proverb. Laertes has the proverb in mind, though he does not mention Ossa. Having used up two of the three he leaves the third for Hamlet (l. 305).

283. *splenetic*, full of spleens, hot-tempered.

289. *wag*, move. It was a more serious word then than now.

297. *Woo't*, for 'wilt thou', is very familiar. Hamlet treats Laertes like a spoilt child.

298. *eisel*, vinegar (OFr. *aisil*). Cp. *Sonnets*, cxi. 10: 'I will drink

potions of eisel 'gainst my strong infection.' These absurd feats are proposed as tests, to show which of them feels most sorrow.

304. *the burning zone*, the sphere of the sun.

305. *Ossa*. Cp. I. 276 n.

309. *When that her golden couplets are disclos'd*, when her twin young ones with their golden down upon them are hatched. For 'disclose' cp. III. i. 175. The young ones are called 'couplets' because pigeons lay and hatch only two eggs at a time.

317. *We'll put the matter to the present push*, we'll get to work at once and decide the matter. For 'push' cp. *Macbeth*, v. iii. 20: 'This push Will cheer me ever or disseat me now.'

319. *a living monument*, i.e. one that will live to be everlasting. He hints also that Hamlet should be made a 'living' sacrifice to the dead girl.

ACT V, SCENE II. 6. *the mutines in the bilboes*, the mutineers in fetters. With 'mutines' cp. III. iv. 83 (the verb to 'mutine'). 'Bilboes' were shackles for the legs, with a bar of iron between them which was locked to the floor.

7. *let us know*, let us know and acknowledge. He breaks off at 'rashly'; ll. 7–11 are a parenthesis.

9. *pall*, lose their flavour, turn flat and stale. The word was used particularly of liquor.

11. *That is most certain*. Horatio is a little bored.

13. *scarf'd about me*, thrown loosely about me.

14. *to find out them* means no more than 'to find them out'. 'Them' is not put last because it is emphatic. It is put last because 'find out' is regarded as one word. Cp. *Richard II*, I. iii. 131 ('set on you'), *Julius Caesar*, I. iii. 134 ('to find out you'), &c.

20. *Larded*. Cp. IV. v. 38.

21. *Importing*, seriously concerning.

22. *such bugs and goblins in my life*, such bugbears and goblins in my continued existence. The King had drawn a lurid picture of the dangers of allowing Hamlet to live any longer, and of the terrible things that he (the King) would do if his order were not obeyed.

23. *on the superrise, no leisure bated*, on the supervision or first glance through the letter, with not a moment off for leisure.

30–1. *Ere I could . . . the play*, before I could so much as put the problem before my mind I had hit out a scheme of action and set to work upon it. 'They' refers to 'brains'.

33. *statists*, statesmen. The affectation of bad handwriting, as a sign of character and originality, is not yet dead.

36. *yeoman's service*. This phrase is now proverbial. How it arose can be seen by looking at *Henry V*, III. i. 25 f. (Henry's address to his soldiers before Agincourt): 'And you, good yeomen, Whose limbs were made in England, show us here The mettle of your pasture.'

42. *stand a comma twen their amities*, stand as a link of affection between them. The 'comma', which connects, is opposed to the 'period' or full stop, which disconnects. It was on this line that Johnson remarked: 'This is not an easy style; but is it not the style of Shakespeare?'

43. *As'es of great charge*, As'es of great weight and moment : with a quibble, as if it were 'Asses of great charge', i.e. asses heavy laden.

47. *Not shriving-time allow'd*, not even a 'short shrift', no time at all for confessing their sins and receiving absolution.

56. *go to't*, go to their death.

58-9. *their defeat Does by their own insinuation grow*, they have brought their destruction on themselves, by worming their way into things as they have done. For this sense of defeat cp. II. ii. 606 n.

61-2. *Between the pass and fell-incensed points Of mighty opposites*, between the thrusting blades and fell and furious points of mighty opponents.

63. *thinks't thee* is 'thinks it thee', which means 'seems it to thee'. Cp. 'methinks' = it seems to me. This impersonal 'thinks' has a different origin from the ordinary 'think'. It comes from OE. *thincan*, to seem ; the other from OE. *thencan*, to think.

Does it not . . . stand me now upon, is it not incumbent upon me ? The order of the phrase is traditional. Cp. *Richard II*, II. iii. 138 : 'It stands your Grace upon to do him right.'

65. *Popp'd in between the election and my hopes*, cut me out of being chosen king, as I had hoped to be.

66. *proper*, own.

70. *In*, into. So often in Shakespeare.

79. *the bravery of his grief*, the bravado of it.

84. *water-fly*. 'A water-fly skips up and down upon the surface of the water, without any apparent purpose, and is thence the proper emblem of a busy trifler' (Johnson).

88-90. *let a beast be lord of beasts*, &c., let a man be but rich in land and beasts it is no matter though he be a beast himself : he shall feed at the king's table.

90. *a cough*, a jackdaw, a mere chatterer.

103. *for my complexion*, for one of my complexion or temperament.

110. *for mine ease, in good faith*. A polite phrase of the time. In the dialogue which follows Shakespeare ridicules, with Hamlet's help, a variety of the affected fine speech of the day. It may be compared with the language of Don Armado in *Love's Labour's Lost*, and of Parolles in *All's Well*.

112. *differences*, in this jargon, are qualities which distinguish a man from his fellows. We should say, in ours, that he was 'most distinguished'.

114. *the card or calendar of gentry*, the chart or calendar of gentility. That is to say, 'the general preceptor of elegance ; the card by which a gentleman is to direct his course ; the calendar by which he is to choose his time, that what he does may be both excellent and seasonable' (Johnson). For 'card' cp. v. i. 149.

115-6. *the continent of what part a gentleman would see*. He keeps up the metaphor of the 'card' or chart. Laertes is a complete map of gentlemanly behaviour. Is there any 'part' or accomplishment that a gentleman would care to see ? Let him turn to Laertes and he shall find it contained in him. For 'part' cp. iv. vii. 73 ; for 'continent' cp. iv. iv. 64.

118. *his definement suffers no perdition in you*, his definition loses nothing in your lips. Hamlet adopts Osric's style.

119-21. *to divide him inventorially . . . his quick sail*, to try to make an inventory of his qualities and add them up would dizzy the memory, and yet this inventory-making would be so far from keeping pace with his qualities that it would seem merely to roll about ('yaw') in comparison with such a clipper as he is. 'Neither' = for all that.

121. *in the verity of extolment*, to praise him truly.

122. *of great article*. 'Article' means item, and 'of great article' means of great item; that is, one who, if an inventory were made of his merits, would have a great quantity of items in the list. For this sense of 'article' cp. *Spectator* (1712), no. 428: 'In his way to wealth, which is the great article of life.'

infusion, 'infused temperament; character imparted by nature' (N.E.D.).

123. *of such dearth and rareness*, so scarce and rare.

to make true diction of him, to express him truly. This is a euphuistic or affected expression. 'Diction' was not naturalized in England until the last quarter of the seventeenth century.

125-6. *his semblable . . . nothing more*, nothing shows anything like him but his mirror; and whoever else would follow in his track is his shadow, nothing more.

129-30. *The concernancy . . . our more rawer breath?* What is the concern of all this? Why do we employ our uncultivated tongues upon this most cultivated gentleman? The antithesis of 'uncultivated' and 'most cultivated' represents the implied antithesis in the emphatic double comparative, 'more rawer.'

132-3. *Is't not possible*, &c. Cannot you understand your own lingo on the tongue of another? Persevere, sir, and you will do it.

135. *What imports the nomination of this gentleman?* What is the import of your naming this gentleman?

142. *approve me*, commend me.

145-7. *I dare not confess*, &c. Hamlet's theory is that truly to know anyone a man must compare him with himself; and in order to do that, he must first know himself. 'I dare not confess,' he says, 'that I know Laertes' excellence, since to know it I must compare my own with it. Certainly (he goes on, going back to the first step), to know a man well a man must know himself.'

149. *imputation*, reputation.

150. *meed*, merit (lit. reward)

unfellowed, without a fellow, unrivalled.

156. *imponed*, put on it, staked.

157. *assigns*, belongings.

158. *hangers*, the four straps attaching the sword to the girdle.

160. *liberal conceit*, generous design.

162. *edified by the margent*. 'I knew,' says Horatio, 'you must turn to the notes for enlightenment on these words before you had done.' Explanatory notes used to be printed in the margin ('margent').

165. *german*, germane, akin.

173-77. Osric has muddled his message, for this wager will not work

out. It seems to have been meant that Hamlet should get a handicap of 3, and win the match if he made 9 hits before Laertes made 12.

177. *answer, encounter.*

181. *the breathing time of day with me*, my time of relaxation and exercise.

186. *re-deliver, report.*

192-3. *This lapwing runs away with the shell on his head.* Young Osric's (l. 205) absurd anxiety to be a full-fledged courtier all at once reminds Horatio of the story that young lapwings, in their hurry to be hatched, run off with the shell on their heads.

195. *He did comply with his dug before he sucked it*, he was a courtier in his cradle. For 'comply' cp. II. ii. 399.

199. *outward habit of encounter*, outward form of address.

199-202. *a kind of yesty collection, &c.*, a kind of frothy talent of picking up scraps and putting them together which takes them journeying from one end to the other of the most foolish and empty opinions, the husks and chaff of the age; and they are such bubbles that if you do but blow them, they burst.

214. *In happy time.* As we might say, 'Good!' Cp. Fr. *à la bonne heure*.

221. *I have been in continual practice.* This contradicts II. ii. 315.

226-7. *gain-giving, misgiving.* 'Gain' has here the force which it has in 'gain-say'.

236. *the readiness is all*, to be ready for it when it comes, that's everything.

236-7. *Since no man . . . betimes?* Our earthly possessions are not really ours. If they were, we should take them with us when we die. Since then, we do not possess them, what does it matter when we leave them?

242. *this presence*, those here present.

245. *exception, objection.* This use of the word survives in the phrase 'to take exception'.

259. *motive, incitement.*

263-4. *a voice and precedent of peace. To keep my name ungor'd*, a definite opinion and precedent warranting me in making peace, so that I may keep my name ungor'd by the horns of calumny. The reader will observe that both this speech and the last are shams.

271. *Stick fiery off*, stand in burning relief.

better'd, i.e. improved of late.

283. *quit in answer of the third exchange*, retaliate on Laertes in the third bout any hit received in the first or second.

286. *union.* A 'union' was a fine single pearl. Its singleness got it its name (Lat. *unio*).

289. *kettle, kettledrum.* For all this see I. iv. 8 f.

296. *his pearl is thine.* He poisons the wine: probably by dissolving a sham pearl with poison inside it.

301. *He's fat, and scant of breath.* This was probably thrown in to suit the person of the actor who first played the part, Richard Burbage, Shakespeare's colleague and friend.

302. *napkin*, handkerchief.

313. *you make a wanton of me*, you are merely playing with me.

320. *as a woodcock to mine own springe*, like a decoy caught in my own snare. Woodcocks were trained to act as decoys to other birds, and sometimes by misadventure got caught in the snare themselves. Cp. i. iii. 115.

331. *Unbated*. Cp. iv. vii. 138.

practice. Cp. iv. vii. 67, 138.

342. *temper'd*, mixed.

349. *mutes or audience to this act*, i.e. dumb characters in it or dumb spectators of it.

350. *sergeant*. A 'sergeant' was a sheriff's officer.

355-6. *I am more an antique Roman than a Dane*. He refers to the Roman practice of suicide in great calamities. Cp. *Macbeth*, v. vii. 30-1: *Macb.* 'Why should I play the Roman fool, and die On my own sword?' This was what Cassius and Brutus did, after the disaster of Philippi (*Julius Caesar*, v. ii-v).

367. *o'ercrews my spirit*, crows over it, triumphs over it.

371. *occurents*, occurrences.

372. *solicited*, urged.

378. *This quarry cries on havoc*. 'Quarry' is game dead or alive. To 'cry havoc' was originally to give the order 'havoc!' It was a sign for general destruction. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, III. i. 273: 'Cry "Havoc!" and let slip the dogs of war.' Fortinbras means: this pile of dead cries out for merciless revenge.

389. *jump*. Cp. i. i. 65.

397. *put on*, instigated.

403. *rights of memory*, rights which are still in people's memory.

406. *whose voice will draw on more*, whose voice (i.e. Hamlet's) will bring others forward to back it.

411. *put on*, put on to it, given opportunity.

INTRODUCTION

I

SOURCE OF THE PLAY : SHAKESPEARE AND PLUTARCH

LIKE all Shakespeare's Roman plays *Coriolanus* has but one source, the *Lives* of Plutarch in the version of Sir Thomas North, one of the great books of the world, and in its English form one of the great translations. It was a Frenchman who first introduced Plutarch to the lay readers of Europe, Jacques Amyot, born at Melun on the Seine in 1513, and born, it would seem, to translate. He was one of those men (they were not uncommon in the sixteenth century) who wrote best when translating. Sir Thomas North was another. Amyot's version of the *Lives* first appeared in 1559, and won instant applause. All Frenchmen who cared for the great characters of the past were grateful to him; and the king honoured good learning by making him a bishop. All Frenchmen who cared for French were grateful to him, for he developed a prose the like of which had not been seen in France: sweet, rich, and flowing, the very reverse of Plutarch's Greek. Montaigne thought no French equal to it. A revised edition appeared in 1565; another in 1567; a fourth in 1579. In 1593 Amyot died, having by one book done more for Europe than all his confederates on the episcopal bench.

When the book reached England it is impossible to say. Probably early, for there was a great thirst in England for books in French. You may think that if Plutarch was to be translated into English the thing to translate was Plutarch's Greek. The sixteenth century thought otherwise. If Amyot's version was a good version, it was good enough to translate from. Amyot had done the first part of the journey when he brought Plutarch out of Boeotia into France; why not simply complete the journey, and bring Plutarch across the Channel? This was the theory,

Amyot's
Plutarch
(1559).

North's
Plutarch
(1579).

a bad one no doubt, but it had admirable results. There was so much less temptation to be unidiomatic when translating from the French, for French is a neighbourly tongue to ours, and Greek is not. It was on Amyot, then, that North set to work. The first edition of his translation appeared in 1579, when he was a man of forty-four. We have no record of its reception; but few books seem to have been more read by the better men of the age. It was one of the books which Shakespeare took the trouble to master. He knew it in its first edition. He had read at least the Life of Theseus when he wrote *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*. The second edition appeared in 1595, when Shakespeare was thirty-one and North was sixty. There was a third in 1603, with fifteen Lives added; and a fourth in 1612. Altogether it went through nine editions in a century: a striking success for so large a book.

North's
English.

The success was deserved. North was a master of English. In many places Shakespeare found his language too good to be improved. No man could open a narrative better than North. 'It was even twilight when he entered the city of Antium, and many people met him in the streets, but no man knew him' (p. 154). This has the unmistakable mark of all great openings: there is the hush of listeners in it. You may hear it again, among the moderns, in the opening of Stevenson's *Pavilion on the Links*: 'I was a great solitary when I was young.' North is more vigorous and vernacular than Amyot, as befits the genius of our tongue. His epithets are more picturesque and his sentences more concrete. Everything must be definite in North. An ordinary writer would have been content to say, of Coriolanus at Antium, that 'no man could ever have known him, seeing him in that apparel'. What North says is this: 'no man could ever have known him *for the person he was*, seeing him in that apparel *he had upon his back*.' (p. 154). Even fact must bend to his passion for reality. Plutarch and Amyot speak of Coriolanus's 'children'. North, impatient of so indefinite a plural, made the children 'two' (p. 142). He is the same in words. He will have nothing technical or colourless in his vocabulary. Rather than use a dull name he will describe

the thing. Plutarch speaks somewhere in his *Life of Coriolanus* of 'gladiatorial shows' (μονομαχων ἀγῶνας). Amyot, heightening a little, makes it 'fencers to the death' (*escrimeurs à oultrance*). North makes a picture of it: 'the cruel fight of fencers at unrebated swords.' He is never the mere servant of his original. He takes sides. When his blood is up he has his fling. Amyot, speaking of the priests who went on embassy to Coriolanus, calls them simply 'men of religion' (*ces gens de religion*). To North, seeing them in his mind's eye and scorning them, they are 'this goodly rabble of superstition and priests': a hendiadys which would scarcely have approved itself to Bishop Amyot. His imagination seldom sleeps. He is on his feet at every turn of the drama, to assist the speakers. Finding in Amyot the sentence, 'for necessity demands that your wife and children should be deprived of one of the two, either of you or of their country' (*pour ce qu'il est forcé à ta femme & à tes enfans qu'ilz soient privez de l'un des deux, ou de toy, ou de leur païs*), he must needs turn it into such great-hearted rhetoric as this: 'for the bitter sop of most hard choice is offered thy wife and children, to forgo the one of the two: either to lose the person of thy self, or the nurse of their native country' (p. 157). One of the most vivid phrases in the whole *Life* is wholly his. It is a wonder that Shakespeare did not use it. It is in that part of the narrative where Coriolanus invades the Antiates and brings back 'all his men that went out with him safe and sound to Rome, and every man rich and loaden with spoil'. Then, says North, 'the home-tarriers and house-doves, that kept Rome still, began to repent them that it was not their hap to go with him.' Of 'home-tarriers' and 'house-doves' there is not a suggestion in either Plutarch or Amyot. They are the contribution of that Thomas North who captained a volunteer band of three hundred men from the Isle of Ely in the days of the Great Armada. North, indeed, treated Amyot as Amyot had treated Plutarch. They had a common desire, to make Plutarch a national possession. Both were successful. North's Plutarch is as certainly English as Amyot's is French. This was the old theory of translation, and a noble one. Translation in this view

His
patrio-
tism.

became a form of patriotism, comparable to the opening of new trade-routes and the annexing of islands in the name of the Virgin Queen. To enrich one's country with the best that the Ancients had thought and done seemed a mission worthy of a lifetime. Plutarch, so treated, lost his Graeco-Roman look, and became in the sixteenth century what he had been in his own, a citizen of the world. It is to this result that we owe the plays of Shakespeare, for this was the only Plutarch whom Shakespeare would have cared to read.

History
and
Tragedy:
Shake-
speare's
dilemma.

Of the three Roman plays which Shakespeare wrote, the first, *Julius Caesar*, was written in 1601. He was then thirty-seven, and had eleven years of dramatic work behind him. Seven or eight years later, in 1608 or 1609, appeared his second Roman play and his third, *Antony and Cleopatra* and *Coriolanus*. In the interval lie the great tragedies. *Julius Caesar*, that is to say, was written at a turn in his career. Up to that time most of his tragic work is in his English Histories, which may be regarded as his apprenticeship to the business of tragedy. To have written *Richard II* made it easier to write *Hamlet*. To have written *Richard III* made it easier to write *Macbeth*. Something, however, was wanting. By 1600 he seemed to have exhausted the tragic possibilities of English history without satisfying his sense of tragedy. This was not because it was history; history and tragedy are natural confederates; but because it was English history. Tragedies founded upon national history can seldom be satisfactory. The claims of what actually happened are too strong. The details are known and are therefore demanded. They are national and are therefore important. But they are ruinous to the firm outlines of tragedy. A perfect patriotic tragedy, it has been said, can scarcely be written.¹ For all perfect tragedies are in their essence universal; but a patriotic tragedy is in its essence particular and local. So far as it is universal it is not patriotic; so far as it is patriotic it is not universal. So far, that is, it falls short of the universal significance

¹ *Shakespeare's Roman Plays*, by M. W. MacCallum (Macmillan, 1910), chap. ii: one of three excellent introductory chapters.

of tragedy. This was Shakespeare's dilemma in his English Histories. In his plays from Plutarch he almost escaped from it. So far as history will ever allow he escaped from it altogether.

Why did he escape from this dilemma in his plays from Plutarch? The reason is in the nature of Plutarch and of his time : because Plutarch's history is not national but European, because Plutarch represented not one country but a civilization, and because that civilization in its consequences embraced Europe. 'He hath written,' says North, 'the profitablest story of all Authors. For all others were fain to take their matter, as the fortunes of the countries where they wrote fell out ; but this man, being excellent in wit, in learning, and experience, hath chosen the special acts, of the best persons, of the famousest nations of the world.' Plutarch was a Greek. He lived between the first and second centuries of our era. He was a member, therefore, of the Roman Empire, which had long ago enfolded the Mediterranean lands. He stood at the confluence, as it were, of the two great civilizations, the Grecian and the Roman, which have formed Europe. The great men whose lives he chronicled were not merely heroes of Greece and Rome. They were the ancestral heroes of Western Europe. Their careers were of European interest ; so far as Europe was concerned their significance was universal. To the sixteenth century, as to us, Caesar meant more than Charlemagne and seemed less remote. Plutarch's manner of treatment assisted this conception. He wrote, not as a student of nations, but as a student of humanity. His chief interest was in the large movement of mankind and in the exhibition of character. Knowledge for its own sake, the ideal of the modern historian, had few attractions for him. Simply to know what really happened, though there were nothing to be learned from it, seemed to him an empty triumph. He thought always of the conduct of life, believing that 'the greatest benefit that learning bringeth unto men is this : that it teacheth men that be rude and rough of nature, by compass and rule of reason, to be civil and courteous, and to like better the mean state than the higher' (*Life of Coriolanus*, §1).

The dilemma solved by Plutarch.

His famous Histories.

You might more easily construct a system of moral philosophy out of Plutarch than a systematic history, for everything in the *Lives* is subordinated to the display of character and destiny. But character and destiny are the very matter of drama. Here, then, was the solution of Shakespeare's dilemma, the model which he desired: histories of the rise and fall of heroes, of character in conflict with fate, histories with the frame of tragedy.

The three
Roman
plays
(1601,
1608-9).

There are seven or eight years between Shakespeare's first and second Roman plays. They were the years in which he wrote his tragedies. His return to the history of Rome was a return to health. A genial convalescence guided him. Having wandered for seven years over the waste places of the world he came to Plutarch for relief as to something definite and confirmed, something on which the mind could rest: historical men in historical situations, moving through well-known vicissitudes to well-known ends. His lonely researches over, he welcomed partnership. It was a comfort to have so shrewd and kindly a philosopher as Plutarch always at his elbow. In choosing his subjects he followed at first his usual plan of preferring what the public knew. The Fall of Caesar and the Fall of Antony, the subjects of his first two Roman plays, were the most familiar and most popular of all Roman stories. The third, the Fall of Coriolanus, was less known and less tried. Unlike the others it lay half in the region of legend. This was a disadvantage in one way and an advantage in another. The hero might interest an audience less, but the dramatist had more freedom. He was freer to alter a story which lay on the borders of fact. The large outline of the legend, with its five natural Acts of rebellion, condemnation, banishment, revenge, and death, he kept and made the platform of his drama. Details, incidents, the casual and haphazard, he treated as he liked. He has taken less of Plutarch's narrative in this play than in either of the other two. The consequence is that *Coriolanus* is the best sustained and best constructed of the three.

II

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

Much has been written on the construction of *Coriolanus*, Plutarch on its dramatic merits and its political defects. We are concerned here with the process by which Plutarch's narrative was transformed into a play. The first question which Shakespeare had to face was the very practical question, why did they quarrel? He had to answer it before he could write a word, and he had to answer it out of Plutarch. Now it was the nature of Plutarch, as of all essayists (and Plutarch was by temperament an essayist, like his admirer Montaigne), that he took little trouble to be consistent. Knowing that most men and all assemblies are at best a bundle of contradictions, he was content to submit the contradictions to the arbitration of his readers. Shakespeare, when he came to study the people's quarrel, had no choice but to arbitrate, for Plutarch is hopelessly contradictory about the whole affair. He begins sympathetically with a question of grievances. The people are ill-treated. The usurers have got them. They demand representatives. We hear of their 'wounds and cuts' in many battles; of their fighting with the Sabines on a promise of reform; of their disappointment and their most orderly rebellion, when they forsook the city, 'offering no creature any hurt'; of their docility when the promise of the Senate was at last fulfilled and the Tribunes appointed. This is excellent, orderly, and just. Can this, we say, be Shakespeare's mob? But there is more in Plutarch than this. 'So Junius Brutus and Sicinius Vellutus were the first Tribunes of the people that were chosen, *who had only been the causers and procurers of this sedition*' (p. 144). The whole effect is spoiled.

About the
People.

This preliminary inconsistency is never repaired. After describing the first rising as if it were genuine, and then declaring that it was 'procured', he proceeds to describe another

rising, not on constitutional but on economic grounds. This rising, he says outright, was manufactured. 'Now when this war was ended, the flatterers of the people began to stir up sedition *again*, without any new occasion, or just matter offered of complaint' (p. 147). He has forgotten that the people were still hungry; that however proud they might be of their new Tribunes, they could not eat them. The Tribunes are slaughtered with epithets. They are 'those busy prattlers that sought the people's good will by such flattering words' (p. 148), who 'spread abroad false tales and rumours against the nobility' (p. 148). They are, in short, 'Sicinius and Brutus, two seditious tribunes'. Once started on this road Plutarch is consistent and follows it to the end. From the moment when the Tribunes are elected he makes the people their tools. It is they, not the people, who banish Coriolanus. His banishment is procured by false charges and political trickery. They rouse his fury with accusations which they know to be unjust, and procure his banishment by methods which they know to be unfair (pp. 150-3). In the end he is only banished by three votes. The immediate occasion of his banishment is not the Consulship. Plutarch's Coriolanus stands his limitation quietly like any other candidate, puts on the gown, shows his wounds, and is simply not elected. He is banished for a difference of opinion: because he objected to free corn and proposed the abolition of Tribunes. There is no loose railing, no mad effrontery to be put to his charge. Only in a powerful and statesmanlike speech he had condemned the methods of the new democracy. He is exiled, in short, by political opponents whose power was too recent to be tolerant.

Shake-
speare's
changes.

This is the story on which Shakespeare went to work. So far there is more trickery in it than tragedy. 'How unfortunate!' we say, when Coriolanus is banished. It was Shakespeare's business to make us say, 'How inevitable!' He began by dispatching the inconsistency. He avoided the constitutional question, on which Plutarch had split, by placing the constitutionalists 'on the other side o' the city' (I. i. 48-9). He had room

for only one rising, so he combined them all, the constitutional and the economic, in one. He had to be clear and consistent at all hazards, so he accepted the theory, frequently stated and constantly implied by Plutarch, that the people were in the hands of their leaders, and that their grievances, real and imaginary, were exploited by their leaders for their own ends. He gave the people real grievances (i. i. 1-91), but he made them a mob. He gave them sense as individuals, but he made them foolish as a crowd. He made them the tools of the Tribunes, and resolved the political quarrel into a struggle, not between Coriolanus and the people, but between Coriolanus and the spirit of democracy as represented by two demagogues. The disdain of Coriolanus for the people is not the disdain of a politician. It is the disdain of a soldier. He despises them as the unfit, and he despised unfitness wherever he found it. The unwashed multitude was scarcely more hateful to him, I imagine, than the fops and idlers of his own class. He looked with a soldier's eye on both.

It was a great step towards drama when Shakespeare decided to go straight from Corioli to the Consulship and make everything turn on that. To have made his hero supplicate for office, like an ordinary man, and be beaten by votes, to fall later in a corn rising by trickery and a majority of three, would have been to write the fate of an unfortunate politician. Something grander and more characteristic was wanted to explain the splendour of his aversion and the majesty of his ungratified revenge. He must fall, if not wholly yet with certainty, by his own strength. The sentence in North which decided Shakespeare is not hard to find.

For the custom of Rome was at that time, that such as did sue for any office should for certain days before be in the market-place, only with a poor gown on their backs and without any coat underneath, to pray the citizens to remember them at the day of election (p. 148).

Shakespeare tried to imagine his Marcius doing this, 'praying the citizens to remember him,' and failed. This was his cue.

You may see it by his way of nourishing the phrase. He plays with it and makes it a refrain: 'the gown' (II. ii. 142), 'the gown of humility' (II. iii. 44), 'the napless vesture of humility' (II. i. 253), 'the humble weed' (II. iii. 229), 'this woolvish toge' (II. iii. 122). Everything must turn on Coriolanus's behaviour as a candidate. He must fall, not by politics and the chance of party, but like a hero, by the force of character and fate. The corn business is not forgotten. It comes in, but retrospectively. Shakespeare had no need of a corn rising to precipitate events. They were on the precipice already. But the speech and the motive of it were too good to be lost. He made the Tribunes refer to it, therefore, as to something past, and made Coriolanus break into a rage: 'Tell me of corn! This was my speech, and I will speak 't *again*!' (III. i. 60). And he does, almost in Plutarch's words. By this ingenious device the dramatist avoided the rising and saved the speech.

Shake-
speare
saves the
Tribunes
and the
People.

It was part of this change that the trickery of the Tribunes and the baser feelings of the people should not be emphasized. The motives of Shakespeare's Tribunes are not disguised, but their behaviour at the worst is pardonable. Politics is a dirty game, and it was sink or swim with them from the first. As for the people, Shakespeare has made them weak in order that he might not make them base: a people not yet in its teens, to be sympathized with, therefore, and humoured, and declared irresponsible of all and sundry its crimes and misdemeanours committed at the instigation of two bald Tribunes who should have known better. Shakespeare mentions the three charges which the Tribunes made (III. iii. 1-6), but he does not go into them. The third and most disgraceful, about the spoil of the Antiates, he leaves wholly unexplained. It relates to an incident which Plutarch records but which Shakespeare does not. Coriolanus, it seems, to shame the people into a better spirit, gathered some friends and followers together and

did run certain forays into the dominion of the Antiates, where he met with great plenty of corn, and had a marvellous great spoil, as well of cattle as of men he had taken prisoners, whom he brought

away with him, and reserved nothing for himself. Afterwards, having brought back again all his men that went out with him safe and sound to Rome, and every man rich and loaden with spoil : then the home-tarriers and house-doves, that kept Rome still, began to repent them that it was not their hap to go with him, and so envied both them that had sped so well in this journey, and also, of malice to Martius, they spited to see his credit and estimation increase still more and more.

This popular malice was the ground and motive of the Tribunes' charge, a charge which Coriolanus was at a loss to answer.

And for the third, they charged him anew, that he had not made the common distribution of the spoil he had gotten in the invading the territories of the Antiates : but had of his own authority divided it among them, who were with him in that journey. But this matter was most strange of all to Martius, looking least to have been burdened with that, as with any matter of offence. Whereupon being burdened on the sudden, and having no ready excuse to make even at that instant, he began to fall a-praising of the soldiers that had served with him in that journey. But those that were not with him, being the greater number, cried out so loud and made such a noise, that he could not be heard.

This was a scandalous business, and the people and their masters appear in this more base, more cowardly, and more despicable than Shakespeare ever thought to make them. It is the same with the voting. Plutarch explains the significance of 'by the poll' and 'by tribes'. His explanation may be read on p. 153. In Shakespeare (III. iii. 8-11) they convey no meaning, for no one explains them. Their effect is lost, and lost designedly, to save the dignity of the occasion. There is one other change. Plutarch records that Coriolanus was banished by three votes. Shakespeare is less sparing and more dramatic. He makes the vote unanimous. 'They all shout and throw up their caps.' Shakespeare's Coriolanus must be banished by character, not by political jobbery and ways and means. Himself, not bare majorities, must be the author of his fate. He must, and does, condemn himself.

These are the crucial changes in the structure of the story in its passage from narrative to drama. For the last two Acts no

Corio-
lanus's
banish-
ment and
fall.

Peopling
of the
play.

change was needed: only omissions of unnecessary things, truces and embassies, the trumpery of history. To people the play was another matter, requiring other faculties. Coriolanus must have friends about him. The Tribunes, Commons, and Patricians who fill the pages of Plutarch make stirring assemblies, but public life alone will not make a play. There is a gauntness about Plutarch's early Rome, as if it hungered for privacy and fewer meetings. It was Shakespeare's task to put this right: out of hints and epithets to people Rome with living creatures speaking with the accent of daily life.

The other
Charac-
ters.

He began at once. All the persons of the play who count are introduced or named in the first three Scenes: all, except Virgilia and Valeria, in the first Scene. His Coriolanus and his Tribunes are Plutarch's Coriolanus and Plutarch's Tribunes, re-imagined. He has accepted every conclusion that could be drawn from Plutarch and has put it into action. The other characters who surround the hero were created out of less: Menenius out of a sentence and a parable (pp. 143-4); Volumnia out of a paragraph and a speech (pp. 142, 156-8); Virgilia by mere inference, not from what she says but from what she does not say; little Marcius by simple division, one instead of two (p. 142); Aufidius out of two statements and his final action (pp. 154, 156, 159-60). 'The Senate,' says North, 'being afraid of their departure, sent certain of the pleasantest old men and the most acceptable to the people among them. Of those Menenius Agrippa was he who was sent for chief man of the message from the Senate' (pp. 143-4). Out of this, and the fable which follows, Shakespeare made his humorous Patrician, to be a thorn in the side of demagogues and the book of Coriolanus's good acts. In Volumnia Plutarch has more share. In Plutarch as in Shakespeare she is the ideal matron, but Shakespeare has altered the ideal to suit the case. He has drawn the mother by the pattern of the son. He has made her father and mother in one, according to the story. There are no tears, therefore, in his Volumnia. When Shakespeare's Volumnia meets her son she does not embrace him, like Plutarch's, 'with tears running down her cheeks for joy' (p. 142). She counts

Menenius,
Volumnia,
Virgilia,
&c.

his wounds, and reflects that for every one of them an enemy fell. Virgilia, I have said, is an inference. She says nothing in Plutarch, appears once, and is mentioned twice. When Coriolanus married her and took her home, he married, we are told, to please his mother, and took her home to his mother's house (p. 142). She is, in short, a daughter-in-law rather than a wife. Shakespeare has improved her place. He has given her a house of her own and has made her the sweetheart of Coriolanus as Volumnia is his adviser. Nothing does more to redress the balance than little Marcius. He gives Virgilia importance. When the boy is in question even Volumnia is deferential. Virgilia is always, however, the weaker will in this strong-willed household. She is gentle, charming, and domestic, and has inherited Volumnia's discarded tears.

These are the friends and the family of Coriolanus. It only Autidius. remained to give him a rival. This was the part of Aufidius, who is not so much as named in Plutarch till Coriolanus is on the road to Antium (p. 154). Shakespeare took him up and put him early. He is mentioned by Coriolanus in the first Scene, nor is he ever from that moment forgotten. His name becomes a refrain, more ominous as the play proceeds. Between the enemy at home and such an enemy abroad we feel how little chance there was that Coriolanus should have a quiet end. These, then, are the persons of the play, the creations of Shakespeare. It is worth our while to observe from how little they were made. The further question, how it was done, is beyond our scope. When we can explain creation we shall know what life is and this world will be too small to hold us. Creation is not to be explained. It is to be accepted and believed. All that we can do is to put the two things side by side, and say: Out of this, by the inspiration of God, that was made.

III

THE TEXT : WITH SOME REMARKS ON DRAMATIC SPEECH

The First
Folio
(1623).

Coriolanus, though it was composed about 1609, was first printed in the edition of 1623, commonly known as the First Folio. This was the first collected edition of Shakespeare's dramatic works. It was prepared by two of his friends and fellow actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, as a labour of love, seven years after his death ; and it contained twenty plays which had never before appeared in print. It is called a Folio edition, because of its folio size, to distinguish it from the various quarto-size editions of single plays (known simply as the Quartos) which came out from time to time. It is called the First Folio to distinguish it from the three other Folio editions which followed it in 1632, 1663, and 1685. It was meant to settle, as far as possible, which of the many plays attributed to Shakespeare were really his, and what should be the standard version of them to posterity.

Diffi-
culties of
text : ex-
aggerated.

The text of *Coriolanus* has a bad name. It is one of those texts which editors call corrupt. Their efforts to restore it, to recover, out of the damage done by copyists and compositors, the very words which Shakespeare wrote, have left a hundred marks on every page of the play. Their footnotes bristle with improvements, and altogether there is such twisting of lines, such changing of forms, such tossing of commas, such triumphing and groaning as obscurities yield or win the day, that an ordinary reader begins to wonder if the wars of the Volsces have not strayed into the margin, among the notes. It is to be feared that, like some other great events, this textual battle was hatched from a very small egg. The editors, one encouraging another, have exaggerated both their difficulties and their exploits. Much less has been done to improve the text than their footnotes give out, and much less was needed than has been done. They found the play abrupt and irregular, full of fierce rapidities of speech and guttural dissonance of metre.

They have left it, after two centuries of tidying, not yet quite neat, but neater and tidier, certainly, than it ever left its author's hands. They have been indeed 'too good for it'. They have scotched it and notched it. They have put a hook in the 'horn and noise of the monster' and sent him into the modern world tame. Now this may be to improve the play, but it is not to correct it. Editors have assumed too readily that they were correcting errors when they were only making a difficult play more readable. The play is rough; but it was not meant to be smooth. It is difficult; but it was not meant to be easy. And it is certainly not corrupt. A corrupt text should contain corrupt passages. But there are only three such passages in the play, i. iii. 47, i. ix. 45-6, ii. iii. 251, and the last of these is a slip.

The first endeavour of the editors of this play was to restore the line order of the original. It is the chief charge in the indictment of the text that the lines of the Folio are highly irregular, frequently deserting the five-accent notation of blank verse, and appearing now shorter, now longer, now like prose. A great part of the work of editors has been to reform this irregularity by bringing the lines of the play into harmony with the laws of blank verse. The most industrious workman in this department was Pope, whose trained ear fitted him naturally for such employment. If Shakespeare's lines must be revised, it is better that a poet should revise them than a professor. His efforts were thought successful. The most acrimonious of later editors, while they denied him everything else, could not deny him a certain skill in the manipulation of verse. At any rate, they left most of his arrangements undisturbed. The result is that the accepted line order of a considerable part of *Coriolanus* is the order of Pope or of his imitators.

What guarantee have we, it may be asked, that the Popian order is Shakespeare's? The question is not easy. It is true that Shakespeare's unit of dramatic verse was the blank verse line; that these rearranged lines are blank verse lines; that they are convenient to the ear, and, as we think, Shakespearean. But it is impossible to deny that several of the passages thus

Question
of irregu-
lar lines.

The test
of recita-
tion.

rearranged read, when they are read in their original disorder, not like chaotic blank verse at all, but like intentional recitative. I will give three examples. The first is from Coriolanus's conversation with Cominius before the battle :

I do beseech you,
By all the Battailes wherein we have fought,
By th' Blood we have shed together,
By th' Vowes we have made
To endure Friends, that you directly set me
Against *Affidious*, and his *Antiatls*. (I. vi. 55-9.)

The second is from Coriolanus's modest protest on the morning after the victory :

Pray now, no more :
My mother, who ha's a Charter to extoll her Bloud,
When she do's prayse me, grieves me :
I have done as you have done, that's what I can,
Induc'd as you have beene, that's for my Country.
(I. ix. 13-17.)

The third is from Coriolanus's speech to the Senate about the people :

Thus we debase
The Nature of our Seats, and make the Rabble
Call our Cares, Feares ; which will in time
Breake ope the Lockes a' th' Senate, and bring in
The Crowes to pecke the Eagles. (III. i. 134-8.)

If the reader will treat these passages in the right way, if he will take first these original versions and then the revised versions in our text, and read them aloud (it must be done aloud), he will find it impossible, I think, to avoid the conclusion that the originals are superior in every dramatic quality. The abrupt irregular beat of their divisions is the beat which the voice follows and which the ear expects. This, we feel, is how a good actor would declaim them. Readers who read only with the eye, and who are better pleased by smoothness and regularity than by any irregularity however dramatic, should be reminded that whatever audience Shakespeare wrote for, he did not write for them. He wrote for the stage, not for the study ; for playgoers, not

for poets; for the ear, not for the eye. He wrote to be heard.

What, then, are we to decide? The same difficulty has met the editors of *Macbeth*, of which a considerable part has been condemned as corrupt chiefly because its editors cannot get it recitative to scan. They would have made it blank verse, but the lines are not long enough to go round. What they object to may be seen in this well-known passage in the second Scene of the second Act, which I quote because it has the same irregular truth of nature as the passages from *Coriolanus*.

Enter Lady.

La. That which hath made them drunk, hath made me bold :
 What hath quench'd them, hath given me fire.
 Hearke, peace : it was the Owle that shriek'd,
 The fatall Bell-man, which gives the stern'st good-night.
 He is about it, the Doores are open :
 And the surfeted Groomes doe mock their charge
 With Snores. I have drugg'd their Possets,
 That Death and Nature doe contend about them,
 Whether they live, or dye.

Who that has read this passage aloud, or has heard it brokenly uttered on the stage, could wish it for one moment more regular than it is? This is not corrupt blank verse, but another harmony, something between verse and prose, looser and more interjective than verse, tenser and more rhythmical than prose. Passion, fear, horror, fury, all the tragic emotions are in their very nature transgressions of regularity. Why, then, deny them the consolation of irregularity in their modes of speech? I cannot doubt what our conclusion should be. Either Shakespeare deliberately wrote some parts of these later plays in a kind of irregular verse or rhythmical recitative (such as his later contemporaries and successors often used), or the change was made from regular to irregular, from blank verse to recitative, to meet the subsequent needs of acting. The two causes may have worked together. The actors may have carried further what Shakespeare began. However we divide it out, we need not be afraid to pass a judgement

The true explanation.

on the regularizing methods of the school of Pope. It is certain that in many places these methods have been the means of restoring the true order of the original. It is equally certain that they have been applied with too little regard for the difficulties of the problem; and that in the rigorous application of them the play has lost something of its original vigour, rapidity, and dramatic force.

Further
dangers :
altered
forms of
words.

The tendency of editors to regularize whatever seems irregular is responsible for other changes in the play : innumerable changes in spelling and the forms of words. There is no harm in this if it be done with care. Charles Lamb showed his usual good taste when he declared that though he liked old authors in their old spellings, he preferred a modern Shakespeare. But the alterations should be made with care, less to satisfy the eye than to satisfy the ear, since the play is speech and lives in the spoken word. It would be difficult to say how much of the original rapidity has been lost by such slight changes as 'the' for 'th', 'to the' for 't' th', 'it' for 't'. They are slight in themselves, but spread them over two thousand lines of active speech, as the editors have done, and they tell. They are like grit in the wheel of the action. Everything moves a little slower on account of them. 'To th' pot I warrant him,' says the Folio (I. iv. 47). 'To the pot, I warrant him,' says our text. 'Call thither all the Officers a' th' Towne,' says Lartius (I. v. 27). How tame and slow and uneuphonious is our 'officers of the town' (the two *of's* colliding). When Menenius asks Volumnia where her son is wounded (II. i. 165), 'Ith' Shoulder, and ith' left Arme,' she bursts out; not 'i' the shoulder', &c., as we would make her say. 'Has said enough,' snaps out Brutus, after Coriolanus's outbreak in III. i. 'Ha's spoken like a Traitor,' roars Sicinius. Can it be doubted that we lose something of the vigour of life when we print these words 'He has said' and 'He has spoken'?

Interest-
ing old
spellings.

The innumerable other alterations of spelling are for the most part obvious and unobjectionable. 'Marcius' would perhaps have lost nothing by remaining 'Martius', nor 'Corioli' by remaining 'Corioles', as in North and the Folio; but these are

trifles. What is serious is not that editors should make such alterations, but that they should add them to the list of their corrections, as if the old forms were in some way erroneous: 'bisson,' a correction of the original 'beesome' (II. i. 71); 'auburn' of the original 'abram' (II. iii. 20); 'starve' of the original 'sterve' (II. iii. 120); 'appearance' of 'apparance' (IV. v. 16); 'clip' of 'cleep' (IV. v. 115); 'holp' of phonetic 'hope' (V. iii. 63); 'cluck'd' of 'clock'd' (V. iii. 163), and so on. These are spellings of the time. They are phonetic, and tell us how our ancestors spoke. When we alter them to suit our modern habits we lose in exactness almost as much as we gain in ease. It is astonishing how little this is recognized. 'Bisson' in II. i. 71 still figures in the proud list of Theobald's corrections, though 'bisson', 'bissom', and 'beesome' are the same word.¹

The verbal slips in the play are fewer than might have been expected if we consider the difficulty of the language, and they are real slips, slips naturally made in the process of reproducing a good original. If they prove anything it is only that copyists and compositors can make mistakes. Few of them are serious. Of most of them it might be said that they disguise the truth rather than corrupt it. 'Tongue' for 'togue' or 'toge' (II. iii. 122), and 'things' for 'thwartings' (III. ii. 21), might puzzle a man; 'Calves' for 'Catos' (I. iv. 57) would have stopped us but for North; but 'higher' for 'hire' (II. iii. 121), 'but' for 'not' (II. iii. 72), 'meynie' for 'many' (III. i. 65), 'heart' for 'herd' (III. ii. 32), 'Through' for 'Throng' (III. iii. 36), 'actions' for 'accents' (III. iii. 54), 'have' for 'hate' (IV. iv. 23), 'pray' for 'prate' (V. iii. 48), 'flatter'd' for 'flutter'd' (V. v. 116), are the easily detectible blunders of copyist or printer. And when these have been detected there is really very little left for editors to detect. Let us therefore say that if copyists

Slips and
correc-
tions.

¹ Lewis Theobald (1688-1744) is one of the best known names in Shakespearean criticism. His contemporaries thought him a fool; it is therefore the modern fashion to think him a genius. He was really neither. He was simply the first industrious editor of Shakespeare.

and composers had been more careful, editors would have had less to do. Let us not say that because editors have been busy the text is corrupt.

IV

DATE OF COMPOSITION: WITH SOME REMARKS ON STYLE
AND VERSE

Date uncertain. NOBODY knows when *Coriolanus* was written, but everybody says that it was written about 1608 or 1609. How is this possible? Nothing is known of the play before 1623, which means that all record of it in its author's lifetime has been lost. We are interested to know that it was published with the proper formalities in the Folio edition of 1623. We are interested, but we are not greatly helped. For we desire to know not when it was published, but when it was written, and by 1623 Shakespeare had been dead seven years.

Camden's Remaines (1605). There is only one way of meeting the difficulty. When outside testimony fails we must turn to the play. We must extort the secret from its contents. Various discoveries are possible. It may be discovered that Shakespeare used some book which he could not have used before a certain date. Such a discovery was made by Malone. He discovered, in turning over Camden, a version of Menenius's fable which reminded him of Shakespeare's, and he suggested that Shakespeare had used Camden to supplement Plutarch. I think there can be little doubt that he was right. Read Plutarch's version on p. 145, Shakespeare's on pp. 3-5, and when you have read these, read this from Camden:

All the members of the body conspired against the stomacke, as against the *swallowing gulf* of all their labors; for whereas *the eyes behelde, the eares heard, the hands labored, the feete traveled, the tongue spake, and all partes performed their functions*, onely the stomacke lay ydle and consumed all. Here uppon they ioyntly agreed al to forbear their labors, and to pine away their lasie and publike enemy. One day passed over, the second followed very tedious, but the third day was so grievous to them all, that they called a common Counsel; The eyes waxed dimme,

the feete could not support the bodie, the armes waxed lasie, the tongue faltered, and could not lay open the matter; Therefore they all with one accord desired *the advise of the Heart*. Then *Reason* layd open before them that hee against whome they had proclaimed warres, was the cause of all this their misery, &c. (*Remaines concerning Britaine*, 1605.)

The expressions italicized, or the ideas they express, are common to Camden and Shakespeare, but have no counterpart in the meagre narrative of Plutarch. It is conceivable, of course, that Shakespeare and Camden both wrote 'gulf', both thought of enumerating the members and their functions, both decided to make the heart the seat of counsel, without contact or collaboration of any kind. But it is not likely. The first expression is too striking and the coincidence of the last too great. The argument that Shakespeare was too lazy to consult Camden, having Plutarch already before him, and that in any case a dusty old antiquary was not an authority whom Shakespeare would care to consult, need neither deter nor detain us. It is of that class of arguments which only take up room. Camden was the Prince of Antiquaries of his age, and the lion, as Falstaff said, will always respect the true prince. Besides, it is known that they were friends. We conclude, therefore, that Shakespeare could not have written this part of *Coriolanus* before 1605, when Camden's *Remaines* appeared.

There is one other date to be got from books, and one only. It was discovered, like the last, by Malone. He was reading Ben Jonson's *Silent Woman*, and was surprised to come upon a phrase which is one of the most striking phrases in *Coriolanus*, a phrase which, as he rightly imagined, could not have been current, but must have been the coinage of one man. 'He lurch'd all swords of the garland,' says Cominius in II. ii. 106. 'Well, Dauphine, you have lurch'd your friends of the better half of the garland,' says True-wit in *The Silent Woman* (v. i). The coincidence is exact. It is to be wished, therefore, that Malone had made better use of it. For first he thought that Ben Jonson was sneering at Shakespeare. But to borrow a good

phrase of a fellow author is an uncommon way of sneering. And then he gave up the coincidence altogether because he found the verb 'lurch' in an earlier writer. But the coincidence lies not in 'lurch', which was an ordinary word, but in the conjunction of 'lurch' and 'garland'. I think it cannot be doubted that Ben Jonson took the phrase from Shakespeare, and took it because he liked it. *Coriolanus*, that is to say, was known before January 1610, when *The Silent Woman* was acted.

Voices
and
events.

Having exhausted books, let us turn to events. Are there any events to which Shakespeare may be thought to refer in the course of the play? To this question, as might be expected, there is no lack of answers. It is no sooner asked than the air is filled with voices. The play was written about 1608, shout three at once; or at any rate not much later. This is fair enough. But why? Because, says one, Shakespeare talks of 'the coal of fire upon the ice' (I. i. 189), and in January 1608 the Thames was frozen over! Very well, says another; but you have not observed the still more curious fact that when *Coriolanus* lived there was a famine in Rome, and that in 1608-9 there was a famine in England! You have both missed it, says the third; the true reason is much more pretty and sad; Shakespeare's mother died in September 1608: that is why he makes Volumnia so prominent. After listening to these voices it would be undemocratic not to listen to all. There is the 1609 faction to be heard. It has less to say, but it belongs to the same school of thought. It relies neither on ice nor famine nor autumn. It rests its whole case on mulberries. Humble thy head, says Volumnia to her son,

as the ripest mulberry
That will not bear the handling (III. ii. 79-80).

Who does not see in this the compliment to King James for his bringing out of France in the year 1609 so many hundred thousands of young mulberry trees to feed silkworms? These are strange voices. To refute them is no part of my design, though they may still be heard echoing in our textbooks. They

refute themselves, for they have indeed the very accent of folly.

The critics who look for parallels in political history are on safer ground. There is a constitutional problem in *Coriolanus*, and there was a constitutional problem in the reign of James. It was certainly a critical time. The struggle of King and Commons, which broke the Stuarts and changed the Constitution, had begun before Shakespeare left London. In 1610 one Parliament was dissolved; in 1614 James dissolved another. Was it likely, we are asked, when events of such consequence were being enacted, that Shakespeare would sit still and say nothing? This is an odd question. I cannot think that it would have been understood in Shakespeare's age. The dramatists of that age, however freely they may have disputed in their taverns and merry meetings about affairs of state, were seldom tempted to exhibit them on the boards. It is one thing to 'sit by the fire and presume to know what's done i' the Capitol'; it is quite another thing to put your presumptions on the stage. The law on the matter was sharp and sudden; and nothing is better known than that contemporary politics make bad plays. That Shakespeare shared these feelings in a degree unusual even in that age has never been doubted. He is the last man we go to if we wish to hear the din of Tudor and Jacobean controversy. To suppose, therefore, that in a play concerned with a well-known story of early Rome, fully set forth in an author whom he fastidiously follows, he should have been dependent for his motive on a parliamentary struggle which was still far from assuming an appearance of national danger, is to distort the evidence of human nature. No one would deny that in dealing with politics in his plays Shakespeare must have drawn on his experience of politics in life. In this matter, as in others, the citizen helped the playwright. But we cannot proceed on that ground alone to cite particular events as the inspiration of particular plays. Even the advocates of 1610 and 1614 must confess that there is nothing in the political situation of *Coriolanus* which may not come out of Plutarch, and that it is an odd way of expressing one's mind about James

and his parliaments—James who shuddered at a sword, and his unwilling assemblies of country gentlemen—to select for the one part Coriolanus, and for the other the tribunes and their mob.

The play
and the
man.

Let us, then, relinquish these hopes, and since other events have failed us, let us study the play as an event in its author's life. Here is a play written by Shakespeare, in a certain style of diction, of metre, and of sentiment, one of more than thirty of which he was the undoubted author. We are asked to tell its age. The problem is a familiar one. We solve it daily when we tell the age of men by their looks. For a sincere piece of writing may be as tell-tale as a face, and to a man who has followed the sincerest of authors (as Shakespeare is) through his twenty years of incessant writing, a line may be as good as a wrinkle to tell its age by, and a jest, a speech, a sentiment, the same thing as your three grey hairs or your bald crown. To such a man Shakespeare's plays pass as definitely through the series of the ages as he does himself, and are young, not so young, mature, and middle aged, like his acquaintances in life.

Style and
diction.

Coriolanus, it is readily seen, is a play of middle life, of the settled years on the other side of maturity. We feel it in the moral gravity of the piece and its military march of action, in its senatorial disregard for the niceties of speech and the vanities of poetry, in its knotty language, its heavy irony, and its sarcastic humour. Of these signs of age I shall examine only two: its speech and its verse. They are equally removed from the style of speech and verse with which readers of Shakespeare are most familiar, the style of the plays in the ten years between *The Merchant of Venice* (1595-6) and *Macbeth* (1606). The difference shows itself in a very practical way. You could fill an anthology with extracts from these plays, extracts that could give pleasure by themselves, that could be recited by themselves, often without regard either to the character who spoke them or to the situation which gave them birth. There are no such extracts to be made from *Coriolanus*, no set speeches, no polished declamations, no flights of poetry rising above the matter and scorning to be

relevant. The anthologist must go elsewhere for his posies and the reciter for his periods, for there is literally nothing in *Coriolanus* that will bear removal. Every word uttered is rooted in its context, 'an oak, not to be wind-shaken.' If you take anything you must take everything. It is the whole scene or nothing.

The verse of *Coriolanus* has the same character as its speeches, Verse. of which it may be said that though they are as fine as any in Shakespeare yet no one knows them apart from the play. No one learns them, no one quotes them. The reason is that they are most of them business speeches, which begin and end with the occasion. The verse of the play is equally business-like and self-denying. To linger in the memory and live in random quotation is no part of its function. Its function, which it discharges to admiration, is to fit the speech of the actors, nothing more. The meditative and romantic graces of Shakespeare's earlier verse are all absent from these scenes, and they are absent for the best of reasons, because they are not wanted. Fancy, meditation, and romance have no part in the motives of the play. The current of the verse is like the current of the action, now sullen, now torrential. It stays to kiss no sedges on its way to the sea. To be poetry, it might almost be said, is not so much its concern as to be the perfectly expressive servant of thoughts and deeds. That such verse could only be written late no one can doubt. None but an old craftsman could so subjugate his verse to the expression of pure action and idea. *Julius Caesar*, which was written in 1601, reads like a young man's work beside it.

We are now within sight of a conclusion. We agreed to think, The verse on external evidence, that the play was written between 1605 examined: and 1610. We are inclined to think, on the evidence of style light and and idea, that the date which we seek is the latest possible weak endings. between these years. The confirmation desired is furnished by a peculiarity in the verse of *Coriolanus*, a peculiarity which it shares with all Shakespeare's latest plays: I mean the great number of unemphatic monosyllables at the end of

lines. This had long been observed and remarked upon as one of several devices employed by Shakespeare to assimilate his verse to the rhythm of dramatic conversation. Extra syllables, both within and at the end of lines, and trisyllabic feet, are other devices which might be named: devices designed to the same end, the loosening of the blank verse line, and used by Shakespeare more frequently the longer he wrote.¹ All this was seen, but no fruitful conclusion was drawn from it. Then some one thought of tabulating these devices, especially this extreme device of final unemphatic monosyllables, and at once the full deliberateness of them was revealed. They were divided for convenience, these final syllables, into two kinds, according as the voice could dwell on them or not. Those on which the voice could dwell for however short a time—auxiliary verbs, pronouns, adverbs—were called ‘light’ endings. Those on which the voice refused to dwell, which hurried the voice inevitably into the following line—prepositions, for example, and conjunctions—were called ‘weak’ endings. The discovery began when *Antony and Cleopatra* came to be examined. It was found that out of nearly 3,000 lines which the play contains, seventy-one had ‘light’ endings and twenty-eight had ‘weak’. Now, though there are twenty-one ‘light’ endings in *Macbeth* (1606), not more than two ‘weak’ endings had been discovered in any earlier play! It was further found that this sudden change, far from ceasing with the play in which it started, steadily persisted on a rising scale through all the later plays: beginning in *Antony and Cleopatra* and reaching its maximum in *Henry VIII*. In this rising scale the next play to *Antony and Cleopatra* is *Coriolanus*. Of its nearly 2,500 lines, sixty have ‘light’ endings and forty-four have ‘weak’.²

¹ They are all very frequent in *Coriolanus*, especially trisyllabic feet. This gives rapidity. Cp. i. i. 101, 102, &c. (final extra syllables); i. i. 104, 232, &c. (extra syllables within the line: ‘y’ of *body*, ‘ity’ of *superfluity*); i. i. 104, 117, 142, &c. (trisyllabic feet).

² It must be allowed that eleven of these ‘light’ endings and twenty-one of the ‘weak’ are due to the rearrangement of lines by later editors. Some diminution must also be made in the figures for *Antony and Cleopatra* on the same ground. But the conclusion is not destroyed by it.

It is therefore held that if there be anything in numbers *Coriolanus* should follow *Antony and Cleopatra* in the order of Shakespeare's plays. Now *Antony and Cleopatra* is almost certainly of the year 1608. *Coriolanus*, therefore, falls naturally under the same or the following year. It was written, we may say, either between the two years or in 1609. This is the date we looked for, and we have reached it.

CORIOLANUS

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

CAIUS MARCIUS, afterwards Caius
Marcius Coriolanus.

TITUS LARTIUS, } Generals a-
COMINIUS, } gainst the
} Volscians.

MENENIUS AGRIPPA, Friend to
Coriolanus.

SICINIUS VELUTUS, } Tribunes of
JUNIUS BRUTUS, } the People.

YOUNG MARCIUS, Son to Corio-
lanus.

A Roman Herald.

TULLUS AUFIDIUS, General of the
Volscians.

Lieutenant to Aufidius.

Conspirators with Aufidius.

NICANOR, a Roman.

A Citizen of Antium.

ADRIAN, a Volsee.

Two Volscian Guards.

VOLUMNIA, Mother to Coriolanus.

VIRGILIA, Wife to Coriolanus.

VALERIA, Friend to Virgilia.

Gentlewoman, attending on Vir-
gilia.

Roman and Volscian Senators,
Patricians, Ædiles, Lictors,
Soldiers, Citizens, Messen-
gers, Servants to Aufidius,
and other Attendants.

SCENE.—*Rome and the Neighbourhood ; Corioli and the Neighbourhood ;
Antium.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*Rome. A Street.*

*Enter a Company of mutinous Citizens, with staves, clubs, and
other weapons.*

First Citizen. Before we proceed any further, hear me
speak.

All. Speak, speak.

First Citizen. You are all resolved rather to die than
to famish ?

5

All. Resolved, resolved.

First Citizen. First, you know Caius Marcius is chief
enemy to the people.

All. We know't, we know't.

First Citizen. Let us kill him, and we'll have corn at 10
our own price. Is't a verdict ?

All. No more talking on't ; let it be done. Away,
away !

Second Citizen. One word, good citizens.

First Citizen. We are accounted poor citizens, the patricians good. What authority surfeits on would relieve us. If they would yield us but the superfluity, while it were wholesome, we might guess they relieved us humanely : but they think we are too dear : the leanness that afflicts us, the object of our misery, is as an inventory to particularise their abundance ; our sufferance is a gain to them. Let us revenge this with our pikes, ere we become rakes : for the gods know I speak this in hunger for bread, not in thirst for revenge. 15 20 25

Second Citizen. Would you proceed especially against Caius Marcius ?

First Citizen. Against him first : he's a very dog to the commonalty. 30

Second Citizen. Consider you what services he has done for his country ?

First Citizen. Very well ; and could be content to give him good report for 't, but that he pays himself with being proud. 35

Second Citizen. Nay, but speak not maliciously.

First Citizen. I say unto you, what he hath done famously, he did it to that end : though soft-conscienced men can be content to say it was for his country, he did it to please his mother, and to be partly proud ; which he is, even to the altitude of his virtue. 40

Second Citizen. What he cannot help in his nature, you account a vice in him. You must in no way say he is covetous. 45

First Citizen. If I must not, I need not be barren of accusations : he hath faults, with surplus, to tire in repetition. [*Shouts within.*] What shouts are these ? The other side o' the city is risen : why stay we prating here ? to the Capitol ! 50

All. Come, come.

First Citizen. Soft ! who comes here ?

Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA.

Second Citizen. Worthy Menenius Agrippa ; one that hath always loved the people.

First Citizen. He's one honest enough : would all the rest were so ! 55

Menenius. What work's, my countrymen, in hand ?
Where go you
With bats and clubs ? The matter ? Speak, I pray you.

First Citizen. Our business is not unknown to the senate : they have had inkling this fortnight what we intend to do, which now we'll show 'em in deeds. They say poor suitors have strong breaths : they shall know we have strong arms too. 60

Menenius. Why, masters, my good friends, mine honest neighbours, 65
Will you undo yourselves ?

First Citizen. We cannot, sir ; we are undone already.

Menenius. I tell you, friends, most charitable care Have the patricians of you. For your wants, 70
Your suffering in this dearth, you may as well Strike at the heaven with your staves as lift them Against the Roman state, whose course will on The way it takes, cracking ten thousand curbs Of more strong link asunder than can ever 75
Appear in your impediment. For the dearth, The gods, not the patricians, make it, and Your knees to them, not arms, must help. Alack ! You are transported by calamity Thither where more attends you ; and you slander 80
The helms o' the state, who care for you like fathers, When you curse them as enemies.

First Citizen. Care for us ! True, indeed ! They ne'er cared for us yet : suffer us to famish, and their storehouses crammed with grain : make edicts for usury, to support 85
usurers ; repeal daily any wholesome act established against the rich, and provide more piercing statutes daily to chain up and restrain the poor. If the wars eat us not up, they will ; and there's all the love they bear us. 90

Menenius. Either you must Confess yourselves wondrous malicious, Or be accus'd of folly. I shall tell you A pretty tale : it may be you have heard it ; 95
But, since it serves my purpose, I will venture To stale 't a little more.

First Citizen. Well, I'll hear it, sir ; yet you must not think to fob off our disgrace with a tale ; but, an't please you, deliver. 100

Menenius. There was a time when all the body's members Rebell'd against the belly ; thus accus'd it : That only like a gulf it did remain I' the midst o' the body, idle and unactive, Still cupboarding the viand, never bearing 105

Like labour with the rest, where the other instruments
 Did see and hear, devise, instruct, walk, feel,
 And, mutually participate, did minister
 Unto the appetite and affection common
 Of the whole body. The belly answer'd— 110

First Citizen. Well, sir, what answer made the belly ?

Menenius. Sir, I shall tell you.—With a kind of smile,
 Which ne'er came from the lungs, but even thus—
 For, look you, I may make the belly smile 115
 As well as speak—it tauntingly replied
 To the discontented members, the mutinous parts
 That envied his receipt ; even so most fitly
 As you malign our senators for that
 They are not such as you.

First Citizen. Your belly's answer ? What ! 120
 The kingly crowned head, the vigilant eye,
 The counsellor heart, the arm our soldier,
 Our steed the leg, the tongue our trumpeter,
 With other muniments and petty helps
 In this our fabric, if that they—

Menenius. What then ? 125
 'Fore me, this fellow speaks ! what then ? what then ?

First Citizen. Should by the cormorant belly be restrain'd,
 Who is the sink o' the body,—

Menenius. Well, what then ?

First Citizen. The former agents, if they did complain,
 What could the belly answer ?

Menenius. I will tell you ; 130
 If you'll bestow a small, of what you have little,
 Patience a while, you'll hear the belly's answer.

First Citizen. You're long about it.

Menenius. Note me this, good friend ;
 Your most grave belly was deliberate,
 Not rash like his accusers, and thus answer'd : 135
 ' True is it, my incorporate friends,' quoth he,
 ' That I receive the general food at first,
 Which you do live upon ; and fit it is ;
 Because I am the store-house and the shop
 Of the whole body : but, if you do remember, 140
 I send it through the rivers of your blood,
 Even to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain ;
 And, through the cranks and offices of man,
 The strongest nerves and small inferior veins
 From me receive that natural competency 145

Whereby they live. And though that all at once,
You, my good friends,—this says the belly, mark me,—

First Citizen. Ay, sir; well, well.

Menenius. 'Though all at once cannot

See what I do deliver out to each,

Yet I can make my audit up, that all 150

From me do back receive the flour of all,

And leave me but the bran.' What say you to 't?

First Citizen. It was an answer: how apply you this?

Menenius. The senators of Rome are this good belly,
And you the mutinous members; for, examine 155

Their counsels and their cares, digest things rightly

Touching the weal o' the common, you shall find

No public benefit which you receive

But it proceeds or comes from them to you,

And no way from yourselves. What do you think, 160

You, the great toe of this assembly?

First Citizen. I the great toe? Why the great toe?

Menenius. For that, being one o' the lowest, basest, poorest,
Of this most wise rebellion, thou go'st foremost:

Thou rascal, that art worst in blood to run, 165

Lead'st first to win some vantage.

But make you ready your stiff bats and clubs:

Rome and her rats are at the point of battle;

The one side must have bale.

Enter CAIUS MARCIUS.

Hail, noble Marcius!

Marcus. Thanks.—What's the matter, you dissentious
rogues, 170

That, rubbing the poor itch of your opinion,

Make yourselves scabs?

First Citizen. We have ever your good word.

Marcus. He that will give good words to thee will flatter
Beneath abhorring. What would you have, you curs,

That like nor peace nor war? the one affrights you, 175

The other makes you proud. He that trusts to you,

Where he should find you lions, finds you hares;

Where foxes, geese: you are no surer, no,

Than is the coal of fire upon the ice,

Or hailstone in the sun. Your virtue is, 180

To make him worthy whose offence subdues him,

And curse that justice did it. Who deserves greatness

Deserves your hate; and your affections are

A sick man's appetite, who desires most that
 Which would increase his evil. He that depends 185
 Upon your favours swims with fins of lead
 And hews down oaks with rushes. Hang ye ! Trust ye !
 With every minute you do change a mind,
 And call him noble that was now your hate,
 Him vile that was your garland. What's the matter 190
 That in these several places of the city
 You cry against the noble senate, who,
 Under the gods, keep you in awe, which else
 Would feed on one another ? What's their seeking ?

Menenius. For corn at their own rates ; whereof they say
 The city is well stor'd.

Marcus. Hang 'em ! They say ! 196
 They'll sit by the fire, and presume to know
 What's done i' the Capitol ; who's like to rise,
 Who thrives, and who declines ; side factions, and give out
 Conjectural marriages ; making parties strong, 200
 And feebling such as stand not in their liking,
 Below their cobbled shoes. They say there's grain enough !
 Would the nobility lay aside their ruth,
 And let me use my sword, I'd make a quarry
 With thousands of these quarter'd slaves, as high 205
 As I could pick my lance.

Menenius. Nay, these are almost thoroughly persuaded ;
 For though abundantly they lack discretion,
 Yet are they passing cowardly. But, I beseech you,
 What says the other troop ?

Marcus. They are dissolv'd : hang 'em ! 210
 They said they were an-hungry : sigh'd forth proverbs :
 That hunger broke stone walls ; that dogs must eat ;
 That meat was made for mouths ; that the gods sent not
 Corn for the rich men only. With these shreds
 They vented their complainings ; which being answer'd, 215
 And a petition granted them, a strange one,—
 To break the heart of generosity,
 And make bold power look pale,—they threw their caps
 As they would hang them on the horns o' the moon,
 Shouting their emulation.

Menenius. What is granted them ? 220

Marcus. Five tribunes to defend their vulgar wisdoms,
 Of their own choice : one's Junius Brutus,
 Sicinius Velutus, and I know not—'Sdeath !
 The rabble should have first unroof'd the city,

Ere so prevail'd with me ; it will in time
Win upon power, and throw forth greater themes
For insurrection's arguing. 225

Meninius. This is strange.

Marcus. Go : get you home, you fragments !

Enter a Messenger, hastily.

Messenger. Where's Caius Marcus ?

Marcus. Here : what's the matter ?

Messenger. The news is, sir, the Volsces are in arms. 230

Marcus. I am glad on't ; then we shall ha' means to vent
Our musty superfluity. See, our best elders.

*Enter COMINIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, and other Senators ; JUNIUS
BRUTUS and SICINIUS VELUTUS.*

First Senator. Marcus, 'tis true that you have lately told
us :

The Volsces are in arms.

Marcus. They have a leader,

Tullus Aufidius, that will put you to 't. 235

I sin in envying his nobility,
And were I anything but what I am,
I would wish me only he.

Cominius. You have fought together.

Marcus. Were half to half the world by the ears, and he
Upon my party, I'd revolt, to make 240
Only my wars with him : he is a lion
That I am proud to hunt.

First Senator. Then, worthy Marcus,
Attend upon Cominius to these wars.

Cominius. It is your former promise.

Marcus. Sir, it is ;

And I am constant. Titus Lartius, thou 245
Shalt see me once more strike at Tullus' face.
What ! art thou stiff ? stand'st out ?

Titus. No, Caius Marcus ;
I'll lean upon one crutch and fight with t'other,
Ere stay behind this business.

Meninius. O ! true-bred. 249

First Senator. Your company to the Capitol ; where I know
Our greatest friends attend us.

Titus. [To COMINIUS.] Lead you on :
[To MARCIUS.] Follow Cominius ; we must follow you ;
Right worthy you priority.

Cominius.

Noble Marcius !

First Senator. [*To the Citizens.*] Hence ! to your homes !
be gone.

Marcus.

Nay, let them follow :

The Volscies have much corn ; take these rats thither 255
To gnaw their garners. Worshipful mutiners,
Your valour puts well forth ; pray, follow.

[*Exeunt* Senators, COMINIUS, MARCIUS, TITUS,
and MENENIUS. Citizens *steal away.*

Sicinius. Was ever man so proud as is this Marcius ?

Brutus. He has no equal. 259

Sicinius. When we were chosen tribunes for the people,—

Brutus. Mark'd you his lip and eyes ?

Sicinius. Nay, but his taunts.

Brutus. Being mov'd, he will not spare to gird the gods.

Sicinius. Bemock the modest moon.

Brutus. The present wars devour him ; he is grown
Too proud to be so valiant.

Sicinius. Such a nature, 265
Tickled with good success, disdains the shadow
Which he treads on at noon. But I do wonder
His insolence can brook to be commanded
Under Cominius.

Brutus. Fame, at the which he aims,
In whom already he is well grac'd, cannot 270
Better be held nor more attain'd than by
A place below the first ; for what miscarries
Shall be the general's fault, though he perform
To the utmost of a man ; and giddy censure
Will then cry out of Marcius ' O ! if he 275
Had borne the business.'

Sicinius. Besides, if things go well,
Opinion, that so sticks on Marcius, shall
Of his demerits rob Cominius.

Brutus. Come :
Half all Cominius' honours are to Marcius,
Though Marcius earn'd them not ; and all his faults 280
To Marcius shall be honours, though indeed
In aught he merit not.

Sicinius. Let's hence and hear
How the dispatch is made ; and in what fashion,
More than his singularity, he goes 284
Upon this present action.

Brutus. Let's along. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE II.—*Corioli. The Senate-house.**Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS and Senators.*

First Senator. So, your opinion is, Aufidius,
That they of Rome are enter'd in our counsels,
And know how we proceed.

Aufidius. Is it not yours ?
What ever have been thought on in this state,
That could be brought to bodily act ere Rome 5
Had circumvention ? 'Tis not four days gone
Since I heard thence ; these are the words : I think
I have the letter here ; yes, here it is.

*They have press'd a power, but it is not known
Whether for east, or west : the dearth is great ; 10
The people mutinous ; and it is rumour'd,
Cominius, Marcius, your old enemy,—
Who is of Rome worse hated than of you,—
And Titus Lartius, a most valiant Roman,
These three lead on this preparation 15
Whither 'tis bent : most likely 'tis for you :
Consider of it.*

First Senator. Our army's in the field :
We never yet made doubt but Rome was ready
To answer us.

Aufidius. Nor did you think it folly 20
To keep your great pretences veil'd till when
They needs must show themselves ; which in the hatching,
It seem'd, appear'd to Rome. By the discovery
We shall be shorten'd in our aim, which was
To take in many towns ere almost Rome
Should know we were afoot.

Second Senator. Noble Aufidius, 25
Take your commission ; hie you to your bands ;
Let us alone to guard Corioli :
If they set down before's, for the remove
Bring up your army ; but, I think you'll find
They've not prepared for us.

Aufidius. O ! doubt not that ; 30
I speak from certainties. Nay, more ;
Some parcels of their power are forth already,
And only hitherward. I leave your honours.
If we and Caius Marcius chance to meet,
'Tis sworn between us we shall ever strike 35

Till one can do no more.

All. The gods assist you !

Aufidius. And keep your honours safe !

First Senator. Farewell.

Second Senator. Farewell.

All. Farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*Rome. A Room in MARCIUS'S House.*

Enter VOLUMNIA and VIRGILIA : they set them down on two low stools and sew.

Volumnia. I pray you, daughter, sing ; or express yourself in a more comfortable sort. If my son were my husband, I would freelier rejoice in that absence wherein he won honour than in the embracements where he would show most love. When yet he was but tender-bodied and the only son of my womb, when youth with comeliness plucked all gaze his way, when for a day of kings' entreaties a mother should not sell him an hour from her beholding, I, considering how honour would become such a person, that it was no better than picture-like to hang by the wall, if renown made it not stir, was pleased to let him seek danger where he was like to find fame. To a cruel war I sent him ; from whence he returned, his brows bound with oak. I tell thee, daughter, I sprang not more in joy at first hearing he was a man-child than now in first seeing he had proved himself a man.

Virgilia. But had he died in the business, madam ; how then ?

Volumnia. Then, his good report should have been my son ; I therein would have found issue. Hear me profess sincerely : had I a dozen sons, each in my love alike, and none less dear than thine and my good Marcius, I had rather had eleven die nobly for their country than one voluptuously surfeit out of action.

Enter a Gentlewoman.

Gentlewoman. Madam, the Lady Valeria is come to visit you.

Virgilia. Beseech you, give me leave to retire myself.

Volumnia. Indeed, you shall not.

Methinks I hear hither your husband's drum,
See him pluck Aufidius down by the hair,
As children from a bear, the Volscies shunning him :

Methinks I see him stamp thus, and call thus :
 'Come on, you cowards ! you were got in fear,
 Though you were born in Rome.' His bloody brow
 With his mail'd hand then wiping, forth he goes,
 Like to a harvestman that's task'd to mow 40
 Or all or lose his hire.

Virgilia. His bloody brow ! O Jupiter ! no blood.

Volumnia. Away, you fool ! it more becomes a man
 Than gilt his trophy : the breast of Hecuba,
 When she did suckle Hector, look'd not lovelier 45
 Than Hector's forehead when it spit forth blood
 At Grecian swords, contemning. Tell Valeria
 We are fit to bid her welcome. [*Exit Gentlewoman.*]

Virgilia. Heavens bless my lord from fell Aufidius !

Volumnia. He'll beat Aufidius' head below his knee, 50
 And tread upon his neck.

Re-enter Gentlewoman, with VALERIA and an Usher.

Valeria. My ladies both, good day to you.

Volumnia. Sweet madam.

Virgilia. I am glad to see your ladyship.

Valeria. How do you both ? you are manifest house- 55
 keepers. What are you sewing here ? A fine spot, in
 good faith. How does your little son ?

Virgilia. I thank your ladyship ; well, good madam.

Volumnia. He had rather see the swords and hear 60
 a drum, than look upon his schoolmaster.

Valeria. O' my word, the father's son ; I'll swear 'tis
 a very pretty boy. O' my troth, I looked upon him o'
 Wednesday half an hour together : he has such a confirmed
 countenance. I saw him run after a gilded butterfly ; 65
 and when he caught it, he let it go again ; and after it
 again ; and over and over he comes, and up again ;
 catched it again : or whether his fall enraged him, or how
 'twas, he did so set his teeth and tear it ; O ! I warrant, 70
 how he mammoocked it !

Volumnia. One on's father's moods.

Valeria. Indeed, la, 'tis a noble child.

Virgilia. A crack, madam.

Valeria. Come, lay aside your stitchery ; I must have 75
 you play the idle huswife with me this afternoon.

Virgilia. No, good madam ; I will not out of doors.

Valeria. Not out of doors !

Volumnia. She shall, she shall. 80

Virgilia. Indeed, no, by your patience ; I'll not over the threshold till my lord return from the wars.

Volumnia. Fie ! you confine yourself most unreasonably. Come ; you must go visit the good lady that lies in. 85

Virgilia. I will wish her speedy strength, and visit her with my prayers ; but I cannot go thither.

Volumnia. Why, I pray you ?

Virgilia. 'Tis not to save labour, nor that I want love. 90

Valeria. You would be another Penelope ; yet, they say, all the yarn she spun in Ulysses' absence did but fill Ithaca full of moths. Come ; I would your cambric were 95 sensible as your finger, that you might leave pricking it for pity. Come, you shall go with us.

Virgilia. No, good madam, pardon me ; indeed, I will not forth.

Valeria. In truth, la, go with me ; and I'll tell you 100 excellent news of your husband.

Virgilia. O, good madam, there can be none yet.

Valeria. Verily, I do not jest with you ; there came news from him last night.

Virgilia. Indeed, madam ? 105

Valeria. In earnest, it's true ; I heard a senator speak it. Thus it is : The Volsces have an army forth ; against whom Cominius the general is gone, with one part of our Roman power : your lord and Titus Lartius are set down 110 before their city Corioli ; they nothing doubt prevailing and to make it brief wars. This is true, on mine honour ; and so, I pray, go with us.

Virgilia. Give me excuse, good madam ; I will obey you in every thing hereafter. 115

Volumnia. Let her alone, lady : as she is now she will but disease our better mirth.

Valeria. In troth, I think she would. Fare you well then. Come, good sweet lady. Prithee, Virgilia, turn thy solemnness out o' door, and go along with us. 120

Virgilia. No, at a word, madam ; indeed I must not. I wish you much mirth.

Valeria. Well then, farewell. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*Before Corioli.*

Enter, with drum and colours, MARCIUS, TITUS LARTIUS, Officers, and Soldiers. To them a Messenger.

Marcus. Yonder comes news : a wager they have met.

Lartius. My horse to yours, no.

Marcus.

'Tis done.

Lartius.

Agreed.

Marcus. Say, has our general met the enemy ?

Messenger. They lie in view, but have not spoke as yet.

Lartius. So the good horse is mine.

Marcus. I'll buy him of you. 5

Lartius. No, I'll nor sell nor give him ; lend you him I will
For half a hundred years. Summon the town.

Marcus. How far off lie these armies ?

Messenger. Within this mile and half.

Marcus. Then shall we hear their 'larum, and they ours.
Now, Mars, I prithee, make us quick in work, 10
That we with smoking swords may march from hence,
To help our fielded friends ! Come, blow thy blast.

*A Parley sounded. Enter, on the Walls, two Senators, and
Others.*

Tullus Aufidius, is he within your walls ?

First Senator. No, nor a man that fears you less than he,
That's lesser than a little. Hark, our drums 15

[Drums afar off.]

Are bringing forth our youth : we'll break our walls,
Rather than they shall pound us up : our gates,
Which yet seem shut, we have but pinn'd with rushes ;
They'll open of themselves. Hark you, far off !

[Alarum afar off.]

There is Aufidius : list, what work he makes 20
Amongst your cloven army.

Marcus.

O ! they are at it !

Lartius. Their noise be our instruction. Ladders, ho !

The Volsces enter, and pass over the stage.

Marcus. They fear us not, but issue forth their city.
Now put your shields before your hearts, and fight
With hearts more proof than shields. Advance, brave Titus :
They do disdain us much beyond our thoughts, 26
Which makes me sweat with wrath. Come on, my fellows :
He that retires, I'll take him for a Volscie,
And he shall feel mine edge.

*Alarum. The Romans are beaten back to their trenches. Re-enter
MARCUS.*

Marcus. All the contagion of the south light on you,
You shames of Rome ! you herd of—Boils and plagues

Plaster you o'er, that you may be abhorr'd
 Further than seen, and one infect another
 Against the wind a mile ! You souls of geese,
 That bear the shapes of men, how have you run 35
 From slaves that apes would beat ! Pluto and hell !
 All hurt behind ; backs red, and faces pale
 With flight and agu'd fear ! Mend and charge home,
 Or, by the fires of heaven, I'll leave the foe
 And make my wars on you ; look to 't : come on ; 40
 If you'll stand fast, we'll beat them to their wives,
 As they us to our trenches follow'd.

Another alarum. The Volsces and Romans re-enter, and the fight is renewed. The Volsces retire into Corioli, and MARCIUS follows them to the gates.

So, now the gates are ope : now prove good seconds :
 'Tis for the followers Fortune widens them,
 Not for the fliers : mark me, and do the like. 45
[He enters the gates.]

First Soldier. Foolhardiness ! not I.

Second Soldier.

Nor I.

[MARCIUS is shut in.]

Third Soldier. See, they have shut him in.

All. To the pot, I warrant him.
[Alarum continues.]

Re-enter TITUS LARTIUS.

Lartius. What is become of Marcius ?

All.

Slain, sir, doubtless.

First Soldier. Following the fliers at the very heels,
 With them he enters ; who, upon the sudden, 50
 Clapp'd to their gates ; he is himself alone,
 To answer all the city.

Lartius.

O noble fellow !

Who, sensibly, outdares his senseless sword,
 And, when it bows, stands up. Thou art left, Marcius :
 A carbuncle entire, as big as thou art, 55
 Were not so rich a jewel. Thou wast a soldier
 Even to Cato's wish, not fierce and terrible
 Only in strokes ; but, with thy grim looks and
 The thunder-like percussion of thy sounds,
 Thou mad'st thine enemies shake, as if the world 60
 Were feverous and did tremble.

Re-enter MARCIUS, bleeding, assaulted by the enemy.

First Soldier.

Look, sir!

Lartius.

O! 'tis Marcius!

Let's fetch him off, or make remain alike.

[They fight, and all enter the city.]

SCENE V.—*Corioli. A Street.*

Enter certain Romans, with spoils.

First Roman. This will I carry to Rome.

Second Roman. And I this.

Third Roman. A murrain on't! I took this for silver.

[Alarum continues still afar off.]

Enter MARCIUS and TITUS LARTIUS, with a trumpet.

Marcus. See here these movers that do prize their hours
At a crack'd drachme! Cushions, leaden spoons, 5
Irons of a doit, doublets that hangmen would
Bury with those that wore them, these base slaves,
Ere yet the fight be done, pack up. Down with them!
And hark, what noise the general makes! To him!
There is the man of my soul's hate, Aufidius, 10
Piercing our Romans: then, valiant Titus, take
Convenient numbers to make good the city,
Whilst I, with those that have the spirit, will haste
To help Cominius.

Lartius. Worthy sir, thou bleed'st;
Thy exercise hath been too violent 15
For a second course of fight.

Marcus. Sir, praise me not;
My work hath yet not warm'd me: fare you well:
The blood I drop is rather physical
Than dangerous to me: to Aufidius thus
I will appear, and fight.

Lartius. Now the fair goddess, Fortune, 20
Fall deep in love with thee: and her great charms
Misguide thy opposers' swords! Bold gentleman,
Prosperity be thy page!

Marcus. Thy friend no less
Than those she places highest! So, farewell

Lartius. Thou worthiest Marcius!— 25

[Exit MARCIUS.]

Go, sound thy trumpet in the market place;
Call thither all the officers of the town,
Where they shall know our mind. Away!

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VI.—*Near the Camp of COMINIUS.**Enter COMINIUS and Forces, retreating.*

Cominius. Breathe you, my friends : well fought ; we are
come off

Like Romans, neither foolish in our stands,
Nor cowardly in retire : believe me, sirs,
We shall be charg'd again. Whiles we have struck,
By interims and conveying gusts we have heard 5
The charges of our friends. Ye Roman gods !
Lead their successes as we wish our own,
That both our powers, with smiling fronts encountering,
May give you thankful sacrifice.

Enter a Messenger.

Thy news ?

Messenger. The citizens of Corioli have issu'd, 10
And given to Lartius and to Marcius battle :
I saw our party to their trenches driven,
And then I came away.

Cominius. Though thou speak'st truth,
Methinks thou speak'st not well. How long is't since ?

Messenger. Above an hour, my lord. 15

Cominius. 'Tis not a mile ; briefly we heard their drums :
How couldst thou in a mile confound an hour,
And bring thy news so late ?

Messenger. Spies of the Volsces
Held me in chase, that I was forc'd to wheel
Three or four miles about ; else had I, sir, 20
Half an hour since brought my report.

Cominius Who's yonder,
That does appear as he were flay'd ? O gods !
He has the stamp of Marcius ; and I have
Before-time seen him thus.

Marcius. [Within.] Come I too late ?

Cominius. The shepherd knows not thunder from a tabor,
More than I know the sound of Marcius' tongue 26
From every meaner man.

Enter MARCIUS.

Marcius. Come I too late ?

Cominius. Ay, if you come not in the blood of others,
But mantled in your own.

Marcus. O! let me clip ye
In arms as sound as when I woo'd, in heart 30
As merry as when our nuptial day was done,
And tapers burn'd to bedward.

Cominius. Flower of warriors.
How is't with Titus Lartius?

Marcus. As with a man busied about decrees :
Condemning some to death, and some to exile ; 35
Ransoming him, or pitying, threat'ning the other ;
Holding Corioli in the name of Rome,
Even like a fawning greyhound in the leash,
To let him slip at will.

Cominius. Where is that slave
Which told me they had beat you to your trenches ? 40
Where is he ? Call him hither.

Marcus. Let him alone ;
He did inform the truth : but for our gentlemen,
The common file—a plague ! tribunes for them !—
The mouse ne'er shunn'd the cat as they did budge
From rascals worse than they.

Cominius. But how prevail'd you ? 45

Marcus. Will the time serve to tell ? I do not think.
Where is the enemy ? Are you lords o' the field ?
If not, why cease you till you are so ?

Cominius. Marcus, we have at disadvantage fought,
And did retire to win our purpose. 50

Marcus. How lies their battle ? Know you on which side
They have plac'd their men of trust ?

Cominius. As I guess, Marcus,
Their bands i' the vaward are the Antiates,
Of their best trust ; o'er them Aufidius,
Their very heart of hope.

Marcus. I do beseech you, 55
By all the battles wherein we have fought,
By the blood we have shed together, by the vows
We have made to endure friends, that you directly
Set me against Aufidius and his Antiates ;
And that you not delay the present, but, 60
Filling the air with swords advanc'd and darts,
We prove this very hour.

Cominius. Though I could wish
You were conducted to a gentle bath,
And balms applied to you, yet dare I never
Deny your asking : take your choice of those 65

That best can aid your action.

Marcus. Those are they
That most are willing. If any such be here—
As it were sin to doubt—that love this painting
Wherein you see me smear'd; if any fear
Lesser his person than an ill report;
If any think brave death outweighs bad life,
And that his country's dearer than himself;
Let him, alone, or so many so minded,
Wave thus, to express his disposition,
And follow *Marcus*.

70

75

*[They all shout, and wave their swords; take him
up in their arms, and cast up their caps.]*

O! me alone? Make you a sword of me?
If these shows be not outward, which of you
But is four Volsces? None of you but is
Able to bear against the great Aufidius
A shield as hard as his. A certain number,
Though thanks to all, must I select from all: the rest
Shall bear the business in some other fight,
As cause will be obey'd. Please you to march;
And four shall quickly draw out my command,
Which men are best inclin'd.

80

Cominius. March on, my fellows:
Make good this ostentation, and you shall
Divide in all with us.

85

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VII.—*The Gates of Corioli.*

TITUS LARTIUS, *having set a guard upon CORIOLI, going with
drum and trumpet towards COMINIUS and CAIUS MARCIUS,
enters with a Lieutenant, a party of Soldiers, and a Scout.*

Lartius. So; let the ports be guarded: keep your duties,
As I have set them down. If I do send, dispatch
Those centuries to our aid; the rest will serve
For a short holding: if we lose the field,
We cannot keep the town.

Lieutenant. Fear not our care, sir. 5

Lartius. Hence, and shut your gates upon us.
Our guider, come: to the Roman camp conduct us.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE VIII.—*A Field of Battle between the Roman and the Volscian Camps.*

Alarum. Enter from opposite sides MARCIUS and AUFIDIUS.

Marcus. I'll fight with none but thee ; for I do hate thee
Worse than a promise-breaker.

Aufidius. We hate alike :

Not Afric owns a serpent I abhor
More than thy fame and envy. Fix thy foot.

Marcus. Let the first budger die the other's slave,
And the gods doom him after !

Aufidius. If I fly, Marcus,
Holloa me like a hare.

Marcus. Within these three hours, Tullus,
Alone I fought in your Corioli walls,
And made what work I pleas'd ; 'tis not my blood 10
Wherein thou seest me mask'd ; for thy revenge
Wrench up thy power to the highest.

Aufidius. Wert thou the Hector
That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny,
Thou shouldst not 'scape me here.—

[*They fight, and certain Volscies come in the aid of AUFIDIUS.*
Officious, and not valiant, you have sham'd me 15
In your condemned seconds.

[*Exeunt fighting, all driven in by MARCIUS.*

SCENE IX.—*The Roman Camp.*

Alarum. A retreat sounded. Flourish. Enter from one side,
COMINIUS and Romans ; from the other side, MARCIUS,
with his arm in a scarf, and other Romans.

Cominius. If I should tell thee o'er this thy day's work,
Thou't not believe thy deeds : but I'll report it
Where senators shall mingle tears with smiles,
Where great patricians shall attend and shrug,
If the end, admire ; where ladies shall be frighted, 5
And, gladly quak'd, hear more ; where the dull Tribunes,
That, with the fusty plebeians, hate thine honours,
Shall say, against their hearts,
'We thank the gods our Rome hath such a soldier !'
Yet cam'st thou to a morsel of this feast, 10
Having fully din'd before.

Enter TITUS LARTIUS, with his power, from the pursuit.

Lartius. O general,

Here is the steed, we the caparison :
Hadst thou beheld—

Marcius. Pray now, no more : my mother,
Who has a charter to extol her blood,
When she does praise me grieves me. I have done 15
As you have done ; that's what I can ; induc'd
As you have been ; that's for my country :
He that has but effected his good will
Hath overta'en mine act.

Cominius. You shall not be
The grave of your deserving ; Rome must know 20
The value of her own : 'twere a concealment
Worse than a theft, no less than a traducement,
To hide your doings ; and to silence that,
Which, to the spire and top of praises vouch'd,
Would seem but modest. Therefore, I beseech you,— 25
In sign of what you are, not to reward
What you have done,—before our army hear me.

Marcius. I have some wounds upon me, and they smart
To hear themselves remember'd.

Cominius. Should they not,
Well might they fester 'gainst ingratitude, 30
And tent themselves with death. Of all the horses,
Whereof we have ta'en good, and good store, of all
The treasure, in this field achiev'd and city,
We render you the tenth ; to be ta'en forth,
Before the common distribution, 35
At your only choice.

Marcius. I thank you, general ;
But cannot make my heart consent to take
A bribe to pay my sword : I do refuse it ;
And stand upon my common part with those
That have beheld the doing. 40

[*A long flourish. They all cry ' Marcius ! Marcius ! ' cast
up their caps and lances : COMINIUS and LARTIUS
stand bare.*]

Marcius. May these same instruments, which you profane,
Never sound more ! When drums and trumpets shall
I' the field prove flatterers, let courts and cities be
Made all of false-fac'd soothing !
When steel grows soft as is the parasite's silk, 45
Let him be made a coverture for the wars !
No more, I say ! For that I have not wash'd
My nose that bled, or foil'd some debile wretch,

Which, without note, here's many else have done,
 You shout me forth 50
 In acclamations hyperbolical ;
 As if I lov'd my little should be dieted
 In praises sauc'd with lies.

Cominius. Too modest are you ;
 More cruel to your good report than grateful
 To us that give you truly. By your patience, 55
 If 'gainst yourself you be incens'd, we'll put you,
 Like one that means his proper harm, in manacles,
 Then reason safely with you. Therefore, be it known,
 As to us, to all the world, that Caius Marcius
 Wears this war's garland ; intoken of the which, 60
 My noble steed, known to the camp, I give him,
 With all his trim belonging ; and from this time,
 For what he did before Corioli, call him,
 With all the applause and clamour of the host,
 CAIUS MARCIUS CORIOLANUS ! Bear 65
 The addition nobly ever !

All. Caius Marcius Coriolanus !

[*Flourish. Trumpets sound, and drums.*]

Coriolanus. I will go wash ;
 And when my face is fair, you shall perceive
 Whether I blush, or no : howbeit, I thank you. 70
 I mean to stride your steed, and at all times
 To undercrest your good addition
 To the fairness of my power.

Cominius. So, to our tent ;
 Where, ere we do repose us, we will write
 To Rome of our success. You, Titus Lartius, 75
 Must to Corioli back : send us to Rome
 The best, with whom we may articulate,
 For their own good and ours.

Lartius. I shall, my lord.

Coriolanus. The gods begin to mock me. I, that now
 Refus'd most princely gifts, am bound to beg 80
 Of my lord general.

Cominius. Take it ; 'tis yours. What is't ?

Coriolanus. I sometime lay here in Corioli
 At a poor man's house ; he us'd me kindly :
 He cried to me ; I saw him prisoner ;
 But then Aufidius was within my view, 85
 And wrath o'erwhelm'd my pity : I request you
 To give my poor host freedom.

Cominius.

O ! well begg'd !

Were he the butcher of my son, he should
Be free as is the wind. Deliver him, Titus.

Lartius. Marcius, his name ?

Coriolanus.

By Jupiter ! forgot. 90

I am weary ; yea, my memory is tir'd.

Have we no wine here ?

Cominius.

Go we to our tent :

The blood upon your visage dries ; 'tis time

It should be look'd to : come.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE X.—*The Camp of the Volsces.*

*A Flourish. Cornets. Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, bloody, with
two or three Soldiers.*

Aufidius. The town is ta'en !

First Soldier. 'Twill be deliver'd back on good condition.

Aufidius. Condition !

I would I were a Roman ; for I cannot,

Being a Volsce, be that I am. Condition !

5

What good condition can a treaty find

I' the part that is at mercy ? Five times, Marcius,

I have fought with thee ; so often hast thou beat me,

And wouldst do so, I think, should we encounter

As often as we eat. By the elements,

10

If e'er again I meet him beard to beard,

He is mine, or I am his : mine emulation

Hath not that honour in't it had ; for where

I thought to crush him in an equal force—

True sword to sword—I'll potch at him some way

15

Or wrath or craft may get him.

First Soldier.

He's the devil.

Aufidius. Bolder, though not so subtle. My valour's
poison'd

With only suffering stain by him ; for him

Shall fly out of itself. Nor sleep nor sanctuary,

Being naked, sick, nor fane nor Capitol,

20

The prayers of priests, nor times of sacrifice,

Embarquements all of fury, shall lift up

Their rotten privilege and custom 'gainst

My hate to Marcius. Where I find him, were it

25

At home, upon my brother's guard, even there

Against the hospitable canon, would I

Wash my fierce hand in's heart. Go you to the city ;

Learn how 'tis held, and what they are that must
Be hostages for Rome.

First Soldier. Will not you go ?

Aufidius. I am attended at the cypress grove : I pray
you— 30

'Tis south the city mills—bring me word thither
How the world goes, that to the pace of it
I may spur on my journey.

First Soldier. I shall, sir. [Exit.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—Rome. A Public Place.

Enter MENENIUS, SICINIUS, and BRUTUS.

Menenius. The augurer tells me we shall have news
to-night.

Brutus. Good or bad ?

Menenius. Not according to the prayer of the people,
for they love not Marcius. 5

Sicinius. Nature teaches beasts to know their friends.

Menenius. Pray you, who does the wolf love ?

Sicinius. The lamb.

Menenius. Ay, to devour him ; as the hungry plebeians 10
would the noble Marcius.

Brutus. He's a lamb indeed, that baes like a bear.

Menenius. He's a bear indeed, that lives like a lamb.
You two are old men ; tell me one thing that I shall ask 15
you.

Sicinius. Well, sir.

Brutus. Well, sir.

Menenius. In what enormity is Marcius poor in, that
you two have not in abundance ?

Brutus. He's poor in no one fault, but stored with all. 20

Sicinius. Especially in pride.

Brutus. And topping all others in boasting.

Menenius. This is strange now : do you two know
how you are censured here in the city, I mean of us o' the 25
right-hand file ? Do you ?

Both. Why, how are we censured ?

Menenius. Because you talk of pride now,—Will you
not be angry ?

Both. Well, well, sir ; well. 30

Menenius. Why, 'tis no great matter : for a very little thief of occasion will rob you of a great deal of patience : give your dispositions the reins, and be angry at your pleasures ; at the least, if you take it as a pleasure to you in being so. You blame Marcius for being proud ? 35

Brutus. We do it not alone, sir.

Menenius. I know you can do very little alone ; for your helps are many, or else your actions would grow wondrous single : your abilities are too infant-like, for doing much alone. You talk of pride : O ! that you could turn your eyes towards the napes of your necks, and make but an interior survey of your good selves. O ! that you could. 40 45

Brutus. What then, sir ?

Menenius. Why, then you should discover a brace of unmeriting, proud, violent, testy magistrates—alias fools—as any in Rome.

Sicinius. Menenius, you are known well enough too. 50

Menenius. I am known to be a humorous patrician, and one that loves a cup of hot wine with not a drop of allaying Tiber in't ; said to be something imperfect in favouring the first complaint ; hasty and tinder-like upon too trivial motion : one that converses more with the buttock of the night than with the forehead of the morning. What I think I utter, and spend my malice in my breath. Meeting two such wealsmen as you are,—I cannot call you Lycurguses,—if the drink you give me touch my palate adversely, I make a crooked face at it. I cannot say your worshipps have delivered the matter well when I find the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables ; and though I must be content to bear with those that say you are reverend grave men, yet they lie deadly that tell you have good faces. If you see this in the map of my microcosm, follows it that I am known well enough too ? What harm can your bisson conspectuities glean out of this character, if I be known well enough too ? 55 60 65 70

Brutus. Come, sir, come, we know you well enough. 75

Menenius. You know neither me, yourselves, nor anything. You are ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs : you wear out a good wholesome forenoon in hearing a cause between an orange-wife and a fosset-seller, and then rejoin the controversy of three-pence to a second day of audience. When you are hearing a matter between party and party, if you chance to be pinched with the 80

colic, you make faces like mummers, set up the bloody flag 85
 against all patience, and dismiss the controversy bleeding,
 the more entangled by your hearing : all the peace you
 make in their cause is, calling both the parties knaves.
 You are a pair of strange ones. 90

Brutus. Come, come, you are well understood to be
 a perfecter giber for the table than a necessary bencher in
 the Capitol.

Menenius. Our very priests must become mockers if
 they shall encounter such ridiculous subjects as you are. 95
 When you speak best unto the purpose it is not worth the
 wagging of your beards ; and your beards deserve not so
 honourable a grave as to stuff a botcher's cushion, or to
 be entombed in an ass's pack-saddle. Yet you must be 100
 saying Marcius is proud ; who, in a cheap estimation, is
 worth all your predecessors since Deucalion, though
 peradventure some of the best of 'em were hereditary
 hangmen. Good den to your worships : more of your 105
 conversation would infect my brain, being the herdsmen
 of the beastly plebeians : I will be bold to take my leave
 of you. [BRUTUS and SICINIUS go aside.

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and VALERIA.

How now, my as fair as noble ladies,—and the moon, were
 she earthly, no nobler,—whither do you follow your eyes 110
 so fast ?

Volumnia. Honourable Menenius, my boy Marcius
 approaches ; for the love of Juno, let's go.

Menenius. Ha ! Marcius coming home ?

Volumnia. Ay, worthy Menenius ; and with most 115
 prosperous approbation.

Menenius. Take my cap, Jupiter, and I thank thee.
 Hoo ! Marcius coming home !

Volumnia. | Nay, 'tis true.
Virgilia. |

Volumnia. Look, here's a letter from him : the state 120
 hath another, his wife another ; and, I think, there's one
 at home for you.

Menenius. I will make my very house reel to-night.
 A letter for me !

Virgilia. Yes, certain, there's a letter for you ; I saw it. 125

Menenius. A letter for me ! It gives me an estate of
 seven years' health ; in which time I will make a lip at the
 physician : the most sovereign prescription in Galen is

but empiricuttie, and, to this preservative, of no better
report than a horse-drench. Is he not wounded ? he was
wont to come home wounded. 130

Virgilia. O ! no, no, no.

Volumnia. O ! he is wounded, I thank the gods for't. 135

Menenius. So do I too, if it be not too much. Brings
a' victory in his pocket ? The wounds become him.

Volumnia. On's brows, Menenius ; he comes the third
time home with the oaken garland. 140

Menenius. Has he disciplined Aufidius soundly ?

Volumnia. Titus Lartius writes they fought together,
but Aufidius got off.

Menenius. And 'twas time for him too, I'll warrant
him that : an he had stayed by him I would not have
been so fidiused for all the chests in Corioli, and the gold
that's in them. Is the senate possessed of this ? 145

Volumnia. Good ladies, let's go. Yes, yes, yes : the
senate has letters from the general, wherein he gives my
son the whole name of the war. He hath in this action out-
done his former deeds doubly. 150

Valeria. In troth there's wondrous things spoke of him. 155

Menenius. Wondrous ! ay, I warrant you, and not
without his true purchasing.

Virgilia. The gods grant them true !

Volumnia. True ! pow, wow.

Menenius. True ! I'll be sworn they are true. Where
is he wounded ? [*To the Tribunes.*] God save your good
worships ! Marcius is coming home : he has more cause
to be proud. [*To VOLUMNIA.*] Where is he wounded ? 160

Volumnia. I' the shoulder, and i' the left arm : there
will be large cicatrices to show the people when he shall
stand for his place. He received in the repulse of Tarquin
seven hurts i' the body. 165

Menenius. One i' the neck, and two i' the thigh, there's
nine that I know. 170

Volumnia. He had, before this last expedition, twenty-
five wounds upon him.

Menenius. Now, it's twenty-seven : every gash was
an enemy's grave. [*A shout and flourish.*] Hark ! the
trumpets. 175

Volumnia. These are the ushers of Marcius : before
him he carries noise, and behind him he leaves tears :
Death, that dark spirit, in's neryy arm doth lie ;
Which, being advanc'd, declines, and then men die. 180

A Sennet. Trumpets sound. Enter COMINIUS and TITUS LARTIUS : between them, CORIOLANUS, crowned with an oaken garland ; with Captains, Soldiers, and a Herald.

Herald. Know, Rome, that all alone Marcius did fight
Within Corioli gates : where he hath won,
With fame, a name to Caius Marcius ; these
In honour follows Coriolanus.
Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus !

185

[*Flourish.*]

All. Welcome to Rome, renowned Coriolanus !

Coriolanus. No more of this ; it does offend my heart :
Pray now, no more.

Cominius. Look, sir, your mother !

Coriolanus. O !

You have, I know, petition'd all the gods
For my prosperity.

[*Kneels.*]

Volumnia. Nay, my good soldier, up ;

190

My gentle Marcius, worthy Caius, and
By deed-achieving honour newly nam'd,—
What is it ?—Coriolanus must I call thee ?
But O ! thy wife !—

Coriolanus. My gracious silence, hail !

Wouldst thou have laugh'd had I come coffin'd home, 195
That weep'st to see me triumph ? Ah ! my dear,
Such eyes the widows in Corioli wear,
And mothers that lack sons.

Menenius. Now, the gods crown thee !

Coriolanus. And live you yet ? [*To VALERIA.*] O my sweet
lady, pardon.

Volumnia. I know not where to turn : O ! welcome home ;
And welcome, general ; and ye're welcome all. 201

Menenius. A hundred thousand welcomes : I could weep,
And I could laugh ; I am light, and heavy. Welcome.

A curse begnaw at very root on's heart
That is not glad to see thee ! You are three 205

That Rome should dote on ; yet, by the faith of men,
We have some old crab-trees here at home that will not
Be grafted to your relish. Yet, welcome, warriors !

We call a nettle but a nettle, and
The faults of fools but folly.

Cominius. Ever right.

210

Coriolanus. Menenius, ever, ever.

Herald. Give way there, and go on !

Coriolanus. [To VOLUMNIA and VALERIA.] Your hand, and yours :

Ere in our own house I do shade my head,
The good patricians must be visited ;
From whom I have receiv'd not only greetings, 215
But with them change of honours.

Volumnia. I have liv'd
To see inherited my very wishes,
And the buildings of my fancy : only
There's one thing wanting, which I doubt not but
Our Rome will cast upon thee.

Coriolanus. Know, good mother, 220
I had rather be their servant in my way
Than sway with them in theirs.

Cominius. On, to the Capitol !

[*Flourish. Cornets. Exeunt in state, as before.*
The Tribunes remain.

Brutus. All tongues speak of him, and the bleared sights
Are spectaeled to see him : your prattling nurse 225
Into a rapture lets her baby cry
While she chats him : the kitchen malkin pins
Her richest lockram 'bout her reechy neck,
(Clambering the walls to eye him : stalls, bulks, windows,
Are smother'd up, leads fill'd, and ridges hors'd 230
With variable complexions, all agreeing
In earnestness to see him : seld-shown flamens
Do press among the popular throngs, and puff
To win a vulgar station : our veil'd dames
Commit the war of white and damask in 235
Their nicely-gawded cheeks to the wanton spoil
Of Phœbus' burning kisses : such a pother
As if that whatsoever god who leads him
Were sliely crept into his human powers,
And gave him graceful posture.

Sicinius. On the sudden 240
I warrant him consul.

Brutus. Then our office may,
During his power, go sleep.

Sicinius. He cannot temperately transport his honours
From where he should begin and end, but will
Lose those he hath won.

Brutus. In that there's comfort.

Sicinius. Doubt not
The commoners, for whom we stand, but they 246

Upon their ancient malice will forget
 With the least cause these his new honours, which
 That he will give them make I as little question
 As he is proud to do't.

Brutus. I heard him swear, 250
 Were he to stand for consul, never would he
 Appear i' the market-place, nor on him put
 The napless vesture of humility;
 Nor, showing, as the manner is, his wounds
 To the people, beg their stinking breaths.

Sicinius. 'Tis right. 255

Brutus. It was his word. O! he would miss it rather
 Than carry it but by the suit o' the gentry to him
 And the desire of the nobles.

Sicinius. I wish no better
 Than have him hold that purpose and to put it
 In execution.

Brutus. 'Tis most like he will. 260

Sicinius. It shall be to him then, as our good wills,
 A sure destruction.

Brutus. So it must fall out
 To him or our authorities. For an end,
 We must suggest the people in what hatred
 He still hath held them; that to his power he would 265
 Have made them mules, silenc'd their pleaders, and
 Disproportioned their freedoms; holding them,
 In human action and capacity,
 Of no more soul nor fitness for the world
 Than camels in the war; who have their provand 270
 Only for bearing burdens, and sore blows
 For sinking under them.

Sicinius. This, as you say, suggested
 At some time when his soaring insolence
 Shall teach the people—which time shall not want,
 If he be put upon't; and that's as easy 275
 As to set dogs on sheep—will be his fire
 To kindle their dry stubble; and their blaze
 Shall darken him for ever.

Enter a Messenger.

Brutus. What's the matter?

Messenger. You are sent for to the Capitol. 'Tis thought
 That Marcius shall be consul. 280
 I have seen the dumb men throng to see him, and

The blind to hear him speak : matrons flung gloves,
 Ladies and maids their scarfs and handkerchers
 Upon him as he pass'd ; the nobles bended,
 As to Jove's statue, and the commons made 285
 A shower and thunder with their caps and shouts :
 I never saw the like.

Brutus. Let's to the Capitol ;
 And carry with us ears and eyes for the time,
 But hearts for the event.

Sicinius. Have with you. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Same. The Capitol.*

Enter two Officers to lay cushions.

First Officer. Come, come, they are almost here.
 How many stand for consulships ?

Second Officer. Three, they say ; but 'tis thought of
 every one Coriolanus will carry it.

First Officer. That's a brave fellow ; but he's ven- 5
 geance proud, and loves not the common people.

Second Officer. Faith, there have been many great
 men that have flattered the people, who ne'er loved them ;
 and there be many that they have loved, they know not 10
 wherefore : so that if they love they know not why, they
 hate upon no better a ground. Therefore, for Coriolanus
 neither to care whether they love or hate him manifests
 the true knowledge he has in their disposition ; and out 15
 of his noble carelessness lets them plainly see't.

First Officer. If he did not care whether he had their
 love or no, he waved indifferently 'twixt doing them neither 20
 good nor harm ; but he seeks their hate with greater
 devotion than they can render it him ; and leaves nothing
 undone that may fully discover him their opposite.
 Now, to seem to affect the malice and displeasure of the
 people is as bad as that which he dislikes, to flatter them 25
 for their love.

Second Officer. He hath deserved worthily of his coun-
 try ; and his ascent is not by such easy degrees as those
 who, having been supple and courteous to the people,
 bonneted, without any further deed to have them at all 30
 into their estimation and report ; but he hath so planted
 his honours in their eyes, and his actions in their hearts,
 that for their tongues to be silent, and not confess so much,
 were a kind of ingrateful injury ; to report otherwise, were 35

a malice that, giving itself the lie, would pluck reproof and rebuke from every ear that heard it.

First Officer. No more of him ; he is a worthy man : 40
make way, they are coming.

A Sennet. Enter, with Lictors before them, COMINIUS the Consul, MENENIUS, CORIOLANUS, many other Senators, SICINIUS and BRUTUS. The Senators take their places ; the Tribunes take theirs also by themselves.

Menenius. Having determin'd of the Volscies, and
To send for Titus Lartius, it remains,
As the main point of this our after-meeting,
To gratify his noble service that 45
Hath thus stood for his country : therefore, please you,
Most reverend and grave elders, to desire
The present consul, and last general
In our well-found successes, to report
A little of that worthy work perform'd 50
By Caius Marcius Coriolanus, whom
We meet here both to thank and to remember
With honours like himself.

First Senator. Speak, good Cominius :
Leave nothing out for length, and make us think
Rather our state's defective for requital, 55
Than we to stretch it out. [*To the Tribunes.*] Masters o' the
people,

We do request your kindest ears, and, after,
Your loving motion toward the common body,
To yield what passes here.

Sicinius. We are convented 60
Upon a pleasing treaty, and have hearts
Inclinable to honour and advance
The theme of our assembly.

Brutus. Which the rather
We shall be bless'd to do, if he remember
A kinder value of the people than
He hath hereto priz'd them at. 65

Menenius. That's off, that's off ;
I would you rather had been silent. Please you
To hear Cominius speak ?

Brutus. Most willingly ;
But yet my caution was more pertinent
Than the rebuke you give it.

Menenius. He loves your people ;

But tie him not to be their bedfellow.

70

Worthy Cominius, speak.

[CORIOLANUS rises, and offers to go away.]

Nay, keep your place.

First Senator. Sit, Coriolanus; never shame to hear
What you have done nobly done.

Coriolanus. Your honours' pardon :
I had rather have my wounds to heal again
Than hear say how I got them.

Brutus. Sir, I hope
My words disbench'd you not.

75

Coriolanus. No, sir : yet oft,
When blows have made me stay, I fled from words.
You sooth'd not, therefore hurt not. But your people,
I love them as they weigh.

Menenius. Pray now, sit down. 79

Coriolanus. I had rather have one scratch my head i' the sun
When the alarum were struck than idly sit
To hear my nothings monster'd. [Exit.]

Menenius. Masters of the people,
Your multiplying spawn how can he flatter,—
That's thousand to one good one,—when you now see
He had rather venture all his limbs for honour 85
Than one on's ears to hear it. Proceed, Cominius.

Cominius. I shall lack voice : the deeds of Coriolanus
Should not be utter'd feebly. It is held
That valour is the chiefest virtue, and
Most dignifies the haver : if it be, 90

The man I speak of cannot in the world
Be singly counterpois'd. At sixteen years,
When Tarquin made a head for Rome, he fought
Beyond the mark of others ; our then dictator,
Whom with all praise I point at, saw him fight, 95

When with his Amazonian chin he drove
The bristled lips before him. He bestrid
An o'er-press'd Roman, and i' the consul's view
Slew three opposers : Tarquin's self he met,
And struck him on his knee : in that day's feats, 100

When he might act the woman in the scene,
He prov'd best man i' the field, and for his meed
Was brow-bound with the oak. His pupil age
Man-enter'd thus, he waxed like a sea,
And in the brunt of seventeen battles since 105
He lurch'd all swords of the garland. For this last,

Before and in Corioli, let me say,
 I cannot speak him home : he stopp'd the fliers,
 And by his rare example made the coward
 Turn terror into sport : as weeds before 110
 A vessel under sail, so men obey'd,
 And fell below his stem : his sword, death's stamp,
 Where it did mark, it took ; from face to foot
 He was a thing of blood, whose every motion
 Was tim'd with dying cries : alone he enter'd 115
 The mortal gate of the city, which he painted
 With shunless destiny ; aidless came off,
 And with a sudden re-enforcement struck
 Corioli like a planet. Now all's his :
 When by and by the din of war 'gan pierce 120
 His ready sense ; then straight his doubled spirit
 Re-quicken'd what in flesh was fatigate,
 And to the battle came he ; where he did
 Run reeking o'er the lives of men, as if
 'Twere a perpetual spoil ; and till we call'd 125
 Both field and city ours, he never stood
 To ease his breast with panting.

Menenius.

Worthy man !

First Senator. He cannot but with measure fit the honours
 Which we devise him.

Cominius. Our spoils he kick'd at,
 And look'd upon things precious as they were 130
 The common muck o' the world : he covets less
 Than misery itself would give ; rewards
 His deeds with doing them, and is content
 To spend the time to end it.

Menenius.

He's right noble :

Let him be call'd for.

First Senator.

Call Coriolanus.

135

Officer. He doth appear.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS.

Menenius. The senate, Coriolanus, are well pleas'd
 To make thee consul.

Coriolanus. I do owe them still
 My life and services.

Menenius. It then remains
 That you do speak to the people.

Coriolanus. I do beseech you, 140
 Let me o'erleap that custom, for I cannot

Put on the gown, stand naked, and entreat them,
For my wounds' sake, to give their suffrage : please you,
That I may pass this doing.

Sicinius. Sir, the people
Must have their voices ; neither will they bate 145
One jot of ceremony.

Menenius. Put them not to't :
Pray you, go fit you to the custom, and
Take to you, as your predecessors have,
Your honour with your form.

Coriolanus. It is a part
That I shall blush in acting, and might well 150
Be taken from the people.

Brutus. [*Aside to SICINIUS.*] Mark you that ?

Coriolanus. To brag unto them, thus I did, and thus ;
Show them the unaching scars which I should hide,
As if I had receiv'd them for the hire
Of their breath only !

Menenius. Do not stand upon't. 155
We recommend to you, tribunes of the people,
Our purpose to them ; and to our noble consul
Wish we all joy and honour.

Senator. To Coriolanus come all joy and honour !

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*]

Brutus. You see how he intends to use the people. 160

Sicinius. May they perceive's intent ! He will require them,
As if he did condemn what he requested
Should be in them to give.

Brutus. Come ; we'll inform them
Of our proceedings here : on the market-place
I know they do attend us. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Same. The Forum.*

Enter several Citizens.

First Citizen. Once, if he do require our voices, we
ought not to deny him.

Second Citizen. We may, sir, if we will.

Third Citizen. We have power in ourselves to do it,
but it is a power that we have no power to do ; for if he 5
show us his wounds, and tell us his deeds, we are to put
our tongues into those wounds and speak for them ; so, if
he tell us his noble deeds, we must also tell him our noble
acceptance of them. Ingratitude is monstrous, and for 10

the multitude to be ingrateful were to make a monster of the multitude ; of the which, we being members, should bring ourselves to be monstrous members.

First Citizen. And to make us no better thought of, 15
a little help will serve ; for once we stood up about the corn, he himself stuck not to call us the many-headed multitude.

Third Citizen. We have been called so of many ; not 20
that our heads are some brown, some black, some abram, some bald, but that our wits are so diversely coloured : and truly I think, if all our wits were to issue out of one skull, they would fly east, west, north, south ; and their consent of one direct way should be at once to all the points o' the 25
compass.

Second Citizen. Think you so ? Which way do you judge my wit would fly ?

Third Citizen. Nay, your wit will not so soon out as 30
another man's will ; 'tis strongly wedged up in a block-head ; but if it were at liberty, 'twould, sure, southward.

Second Citizen. Why that way ?

Third Citizen. To lose itself in a fog ; where being three 35
parts melted away with rotten dews, the fourth would return for conscience' sake, to help to get thee a wife.

Second Citizen. You are never without your tricks : you may, you may.

Third Citizen. Are you all resolved to give your voices ? 40
But that's no matter, the greater part carries it. I say, if he would incline to the people, there was never a worthier man.

Re-enter CORIOLANUS, in a gown of humility, and MENENIUS.

Here he comes, and in a gown of humility : mark his 45
behaviour. We are not to stay all together, but to come by him where he stands, by ones, by twos, and by threes. He's to make his requests by particulars ; wherein every one of us has a single honour, in giving him our own voices with our own tongues : therefore follow me, and I'll direct 50
you how you shall go by him.

All. Content, content.

[Exeunt Citizens.]

Menenius. O, sir, you are not right : have you not known 55
The worthiest men have done't ?

Coriolanus.

What must I say ?

'I pray, sir,'—Plague upon't ! I cannot bring 55
My tongue to such a pace. 'Look, sir, my wounds !

I got them in my country's service, when
Some certain of your brethren roar'd and ran
From the noise of our own drums.'

Menenius.

O me! the gods!

You must not speak of that: you must desire them 60
To think upon you.

Coriolanus.

Think upon me! Hang 'em!

I would they would forget me, like the virtues
Which our divines lose by 'em.

Menenius.

You'll mar all:

I'll leave you. Pray you, speak to 'em, I pray you,
In wholesome manner.

Coriolanus.

Bid them wash their faces, 65

And keep their teeth clean. [*Exit MENENIUS.*]

So, here comes a brace.

Re-enter two Citizens.

You know the cause, sir, of my standing here?

First Citizen. We do, sir; tell us what hath brought
you to't.

Coriolanus. Mine own desert. 70

Second Citizen. Your own desert!

Coriolanus. Ay, not mine own desire.

First Citizen. How! not your own desire?

Coriolanus. No, sir, 'twas never my desire yet to trouble
the poor with begging. 75

First Citizen. You must think, if we give you any
thing, we hope to gain by you.

Coriolanus. Well, then, I pray, your price o' the consul-
ship?

First Citizen. The price is, to ask it kindly. 80

Coriolanus. Kindly! sir, I pray, let me ha't: I have
wounds to show you, which shall be yours in private.
Your good voice, sir; what say you?

Second Citizen. You shall ha't, worthy sir.

Coriolanus. A match, sir. There is in all two worthy 85
voices begged. I have your alms: adieu.

First Citizen. But this is something odd.

Second Citizen. An 'twere to give again,—but 'tis no
matter. [*Exeunt the two Citizens.*]

Re-enter two other Citizens.

Coriolanus. Pray you now, if it may stand with the 90
tune of your voices that I may be consul, I have here the
customary gown.

Third Citizen. You have deserved nobly of your country, and you have not deserved nobly.

Coriolanus. Your enigma ?

95

Third Citizen. You have been a scourge to her enemies, you have been a rod to her friends ; you have not indeed loved the common people.

Coriolanus. You should account me the more virtuous that I have not been common in my love. I will, sir, 100
flatter my sworn brother the people, to earn a dearer estimation of them ; 'tis a condition they account gentle : and since the wisdom of their choice is rather to have my hat than my heart, I will practise the insinuating nod, and 105
be off to them most counterfeitly ; that is, sir, I will counterfeit the bewitchment of some popular man, and give it bountifully to the desirers. Therefore, beseech you, I may be consul. 110

Fourth Citizen. We hope to find you our friend, and therefore give you our voices heartily.

Third Citizen. You have received many wounds for your country.

Coriolanus. I will not seal your knowledge with showing them. I will make much of your voices, and so trouble 115
you no further.

Both Citizens. The gods give you joy, sir, heartily !

[*Exeunt.*]

Coriolanus. Most sweet voices !

Better it is to die, better to starve, 120
Than crave the hire which first we do deserve.
Why in this woolvish toge should I stand here,
To beg of Hob and Dick, that do appear,
Their needless vouches ? Custom calls me to 't :
What custom wills, in all things should we do 't, 125
The dust on antique time would lie unswept,
And mountainous error be too highly heap'd
For truth to o'er-peer. Rather than fool it so,
Let the high office and the honour go
To one that would do thus. I am half through ; 130
The one part suffer'd, the other will I do.
Here come more voices.

Re-enter three other Citizens.

Your voices : for your voices I have fought ;
Watch'd for your voices ; for your voices bear
Of wounds two dozen odd ; battles thrice six 135

I have seen and heard of ; for your voices have
Done many things, some less, some more ; your voices :
Indeed, I would be consul.

Fifth Citizen. He has done nobly, and cannot go with-
out any honest man's voice. 140

Sixth Citizen. Therefore let him be consul. The gods
give him joy, and make him good friend to the people !

All. Amen, amen.

God save thee, noble consul ! *[Exeunt Citizens.]*

Coriolanus. Worthy voices ! 145

Re-enter MENENIUS, with BRUTUS and SICINIUS.

Menenius. You have stood your limitation ; and the
tribunes

Endue you with the people's voice : remains
That, in the official marks invested, you
Anon do meet the senate.

Coriolanus. Is this done ?

Sicinius. The custom of request you have discharg'd :
The people do admit you, and are summon'd 151
To meet anon, upon your approbation.

Coriolanus. Where ? at the senate-house ?

Sicinius. There, Coriolanus.

Coriolanus. May I change these garments ?

Sicinius. You may, sir. 155

Coriolanus. That I'll straight do ; and, knowing myself
again,

Repair to the senate-house

Menenius. I'll keep you company. Will you along ?

Brutus. We stay here for the people.

Sicinius. Fare you well.

[Exeunt CORIOLANUS and MENENIUS.]

He has it now ; and by his looks, methinks, 160
'Tis warm at's heart.

Brutus. With a proud heart he wore

His humble weeds. Will you dismiss the people ?

Re-enter Citizens.

Sicinius. How now, my masters ! have you chose this man ?

First Citizen. He has our voices, sir.

Brutus. We pray the gods he may deserve your love. 165

Second Citizen. Amen, sir. To my poor unworthy notice,
He mock'd us when he begg'd our voices.

Third Citizen.

Certainly,

He flouted us downright

First Citizen. No, 'tis his kind of speech ; he did not mock us.

Second Citizen. Not one amongst us, save yourself, but says 170

He used us scornfully : he should have show'd us

His marks of merit, wounds receiv'd for's country.

Sicinius. Why, so he did, I am sure.

All. No, no ; no man saw 'em.

Third Citizen. He said he had wounds, which he could show in private ;

And with his hat, thus waving it in scorn, 175

'I would be consul,' says he : 'aged custom,

But by your voices, will not so permit me ;

Your voices therefore : ' when we granted that,

Here was, 'I thank you for your voices, thank you,

Your most sweet voices : now you have left your voices 180

I have no further with you.' Was not this mockery ?

Sicinius. Why, either were you ignorant to see't,

Or, seeing it, of such childish friendliness

To yield your voices ?

Brutus. Could you not have told him

As you were lesson'd, when he had no power, 185

But was a petty servant to the state,

He was your enemy, ever spake against

Your liberties and the charters that you bear

I' the body of the weal ; and now, arriving

A place of potency and sway o' the state, 190

If he should still malignantly remain

Fast foe to the plebeii, your voices might

Be curses to yourselves ? You should have said

That as his worthy deeds did claim no less

Than what he stood for, so his gracious nature 195

Would think upon you for your voices and

Translate his malice towards you into love,

Standing your friendly lord.

Sicinius. Thus to have said,

As you were fore-advis'd, had touch'd his spirit

And tried his inclination : from him pluck'd 200

Either his gracious promise, which you might,

As cause had call'd you up, have held him to ;

Or else it would have gall'd his surly nature,

Which easily endures not article

Tying him to aught ; so, putting him to rage, 205
You should have ta'en the advantage of his choler,
And pass'd him unelected.

Brutus. Did you perceive
He did solicit you in free contempt
When he did need your loves, and do you think
That his contempt shall not be bruising to you 210
When he hath power to crush ? Why, had your bodies
No heart among you ? or had you tongues to cry
Against the rectorship of judgment ?

Sicinius. Have you
Ere now denied the asker ? and now again
Of him that did not ask, but mock, bestow 215
Your sued-for tongues ?

Third Citizen. He's not confirm'd ; we may deny him yet.

Second Citizen. And will deny him :
I'll have five hundred voices of that sound.

First Citizen. Ay, twice five hundred and their friends to
piece 'em. 220

Brutus. Get you hence instantly, and tell those friends,
They have chose a consul that will from them take
Their liberties ; make them of no more voice
Than dogs that are as often beat for barking
As therefore kept to do so.

Sicinius. Let them assemble ; 225
And, on a safer judgment, all revoke
Your ignorant election. Enforce his pride,
And his old hate unto you ; besides, forget not
With what contempt he wore the humble weed ;
How in his suit he scorn'd you ; but your loves, 230
Thinking upon his services, took from you
The apprehension of his present portance,
Which most gibingly, ungravely, he did fashion
After the inveterate hate he bears you.

Brutus. Lay
A fault on us, your tribunes ; that we labour'd,— 235
No impediment between,—but that you must
Cast your election on him.

Sicinius. Say, you chose him
More after our commandment than as guided
By your own true affections ; and that, your minds,
Pre-occupied with what you rather must do 240
Than what you should, made you against the grain
To voice him consul : lay the fault on us.

Brutus. Ay, spare us not. Say we read lectures to you,
 How youngly he began to serve his country,
 How long continu'd, and what stock he springs of, 245
 The noble house o' the Marcians, from whence came
 That Ancus Marcius, Numa's daughter's son,
 Who, after great Hostilius, here was king ;
 Of the same house Publius and Quintus were,
 That our best water brought by conduits hither ; 250
 And Censorinus, that was so surnam'd,—
 And nobly nam'd so, twice being censor,—
 Was his great ancestor.

Sicinius. One thus descended,
 That hath, beside, well in his person wrought
 To be set high in place, we did commend 255
 To your remembrances ; but you have found,
 Sealing his present bearing with his past,
 That he's your fixed enemy, and revoke
 Your sudden approbation.

Brutus. Say you ne'er had done 't—
 Harp on that still—but by our putting on ; 260
 And presently, when you have drawn your number,
 Repair to the Capitol.

All. We will so ; almost all
 Repent in their election. [*Exeunt Citizens.*]

Brutus. Let them go on ;
 This mutiny were better put in hazard
 Than stay, past doubt, for greater. 265
 If, as his nature is, he fall in rage
 With their refusal, both observe and answer
 The vantage of his anger.

Sicinius. To the Capitol, come :
 We will be there before the stream o' the people ;
 And this shall seem, as partly 'tis, their own, 270
 Which we have goaded onward. [*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—Rome. A Street.

Cornets. Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, TITUS
 LARTIUS, Senators, and Patricians

Coriolanus. Tullus Aufidius then had made new head ?

Lartius. He had, my lord ; and that it was which caus'd
 Our swifter composition.

Coriolanus. So then the Volscies stand but as at first,

Ready, when time shall prompt them, to make road 5
Upon's again.

Cominius. They are worn, lord consul, so,
That we shall hardly in our ages see
Their banners wave again.

Coriolanus. Saw you Aufidius ?

Lartius. On safe-guard he came to me ; and did curse
Against the Volsces, for they had so vilely 10
Yielded the town : he is retir'd to Antium.

Coriolanus. Spoke he of me ?

Lartius. He did, my lord.

Coriolanus. How ? what ?

Lartius. How often he had met you, sword to sword ;
That of all things upon the earth he hated
Your person most, that he would pawn his fortunes 15
To hopeless restitution, so he might
Be call'd your vanquisher.

Coriolanus. At Antium lives he ?

Lartius. At Antium.

Coriolanus. I wish I had a cause to seek him there,
To oppose his hatred fully. Welcome home. 20

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Behold ! these are the tribunes of the people,
The tongues o' the common mouth : I do despise them ;
For they do prank them in authority
Against all noble sufferance.

Sicinius. Pass no further.

Coriolanus. Ha ! what is that ? 25

Brutus. It will be dangerous to go on : no further.

Coriolanus. What makes this change ?

Menenius. The matter ?

Cominius. Hath he not pass'd the noble and the common ?

Brutus. Cominius, no.

Coriolanus. Have I had children's voices ?

First Senator. Tribunes, give way ; he shall to the market-
place. 30

Brutus. The people are incens'd against him.

Sicinius. Stop,

Or all will fall in broil.

Coriolanus. Are these your herd ?

Must these have voices, that can yield them now,
And straight disclaim their tongues ? What are your offices ?
You being their mouths, why rule you not their teeth ? 35

Have you not set them on ?

Menenius. Be calm, be calm.

Coriolanus. It is a purpos'd thing, and grows by plot,
To curb the will of the nobility :

Suffer 't, and live with such as cannot rule
Nor ever will be rul'd.

Brutus. Call 't not a plot : 40

The people cry you mock'd them, and of late,
When corn was given them gratis, you repin'd ;
Scandall'd the suppliants for the people, call'd them
Time-pleasers, flatterers, foes to nobleness.

Coriolanus. Why, this was known before.

Brutus. Not to them all. 45

Coriolanus. Have you inform'd them sithence ?

Brutus. How ! I inform them !

Cominius. You are like to do such business.

Brutus. Not unlike,

Each way, to better yours

Coriolanus. Why then should I be consul ? By yond clouds
Let me deserve so ill as you, and make me 50
Your fellow tribune.

Sicinius. You show too much of that
For which the people stir ; if you will pass
To where you are bound, you must inquire your way,
Which you are out of, with a gentler spirit ;
Or never be so noble as a consul, 55
Nor yoke with him for tribune.

Menenius. Let's be calm.

Cominius. The people are abus'd ; set on. This paltering
Becomes not Rome, nor has Coriolanus
Deserv'd this so dishonour'd rub, laid falsely
I' the plain way of his merit.

Coriolanus. Tell me of corn ! 60
This was my speech, and I will speak 't again,—

Menenius. Not now, not now.

First Senator. Not in this heat, sir, now.

Coriolanus. Now, as I live, I will. My nobler friends,
I crave their pardons :

For the mutable, rank-scented many, let them 65
Regard me as I do not flatter, and

Therein behold themselves : I say again,
In soothing them we nourish 'gainst our senate
The cockle of rebellion, insolence, sedition,

Which we ourselves have plough'd for, sow'd and scatter'd, 70

By mingling them with us, the honour'd number ;
 Who lack'd not virtue, no, nor power, but that
 Which they have given to beggars.

Menenius.

Well, no more.

First Senator. No more words, we beseech you.

Coriolanus.

How ! no more !

As for my country I have shed my blood, 75
 Not fearing outward force, so shall my lungs
 Coin words till they decay against those measles,
 Which we disdain should tetter us, yet sought
 The very way to catch them.

Brutus.

You speak o' the people,

As if you were a god to punish, not 80
 A man of their infirmity.

Sicinius.

'Twere well

We let the people know 't.

Menenius.

What, what ? his choler ?

Coriolanus. Choler !

Were I as patient as the midnight sleep,
 By Jove, 'twould be my mind !

Sicinius.

It is a mind

85

That shall remain a poison where it is,
 Not poison any further.

Coriolanus.

Shall remain !

Hear you this Triton of the minnows ? mark you
 His absolute 'shall ?'

Cominius.

'Twas from the canon.

Coriolanus.

'Shall !'

O good but most unwise patricians ! why, 90
 You grave but reckless senators, have you thus
 Given Hydra here to choose an officer,
 That with his peremptory 'shall,' being but
 The horn and noise o' the monster's, wants not spirit
 To say he'll turn your current in a ditch, 95
 And make you channel his ? If he have power,
 Then veil your ignorance ; if none, awake
 Your dangerous lenity. If you are learned,
 Be not as common fools ; if you are not,
 Let them have cushions by you. You are plebeians 100
 If they be senators ; and they are no less,
 When, both your voices blended, the great'st taste
 Most palates theirs. They choose their magistrate,
 And such a one as he, who puts his 'shall,'
 His popular 'shall,' against a graver bench 105

Than ever frown'd in Greece. By Jove himself !
 It makes the consuls base ; and my soul aches
 To know, when two authorities are up,
 Neither supreme, how soon confusion
 May enter 'twixt the gap of both and take 110
 The one by the other.

Cominius. Well, on to the market-place.

Coriolanus. Whoever gave that counsel, to give forth
 The corn o' the store-house gratis, as 'twas us'd
 Sometime in Greece,—

Menenius. Well, well ; no more of that.

Coriolanus. Though there the people had more absolute power,
 I say, they nourish'd disobedience, fed 116
 The ruin of the state.

Brutus. Why, shall the people give
 One that speaks thus their voice ?

Coriolanus. I'll give my reasons,
 More worthier than their voices. They know the corn
 Was not our recompense, resting well assur'd 120
 They ne'er did service for't. Being press'd to the war,
 Even when the navel of the state was touch'd,
 They would not thread the gates : this kind of service
 Did not deserve corn gratis. Being i' the war,
 Their mutinies and revolts, wherein they show'd 125
 Most valour, spoke not for them. The accusation
 Which they have often made against the senate,
 All cause unborn, could never be the motive
 Of our so frank donation. Well, what then ?
 How shall this bosom multiplied digest 130
 The senate's courtesy ? Let deeds express
 What's like to be their words : ' We did request it ;
 We are the greater poll, and in true fear
 They gave us our demands.' Thus we debase
 The nature of our seats, and make the rabble 135
 Call our cares, fears ; which will in time break ope
 The locks o' the senate, and bring in the crows
 To peck the eagles.

Menenius. Come, enough.

Brutus. Enough, with over-measure.

Coriolanus. No, take more :
 What may be sworn by, both divine and human, 140
 Seal what I end withal ! This double worship,
 Where one part does disdain with cause, the other
 Insult without all reason ; where gentry, title, wisdom,

Cannot conclude, but by the yea and no
 Of general ignorance,—it must omit 145
 Real necessities, and give way the while
 To unstable slightness: purpose so barr'd, it follows
 Nothing is done to purpose. Therefore, beseech you,—
 You that will be less fearful than discreet,
 That love the fundamental part of state 150
 More than you doubt the change on't, that prefer
 A noble life before a long, and wish
 To jump a body with a dangerous physic
 That's sure of death without it,—at once pluck out
 The multitudinous tongue; let them not lick 155
 The sweet which is their poison. Your dishonour
 Mangles true judgment, and bereaves the state
 Of that integrity which should become it,
 Not having the power to do the good it would,
 For the ill which doth control't.

Brutus. He has said enough. 160

Sicinius. He has spoken like a traitor, and shall answer
 As traitors do.

Coriolanus. Thou wretch! despite o'erwhelm thee!
 What should the people do with these bald tribunes?
 On whom depending, their obedience fails 165
 To the greater bench. In a rebellion,
 When what's not meet, but what must be, was law,
 Then were they chosen: in a better hour,
 Let what is meet be said it must be meet,
 And throw their power i' the dust. 170

Brutus. Manifest treason!

Sicinius. This a consul? no.

Brutus. The ædiles, ho! Let him be apprehended.

Enter an Ædile.

Sicinius. Go, call the people; [*Exit Ædile*] in whose name,
 myself
 Attach thee as a traitorous innovator,
 A foe to the public weal: obey, I charge thee, 175
 And follow to thine answer.

Coriolanus. Hence, old goat!

Senator. We'll surety him.

Cominius. Aged sir, hands off.

Coriolanus. Hence, rotten thing! or I shall shake thy bones
 Out of thy garments.

Sicinius. Help, ye citizens!

Re-enter Ædiles, with Others, and a rabble of Citizens.

Menenius. On both sides more respect. 180

Sicinius. Here's he that would take from you all your power.

Brutus. Seize him, ædiles !

Citizens. Down with him !—down with him !—

Senator. Weapons !—weapons !—weapons !—

[They all bustle about CORIOLANUS, crying

Tribunes !—patricians !—citizens !—What ho !— 185

Sicinius !—Brutus !—Coriolanus !—Citizens !

Peace !—Peace !—Peace !—Stay !—Hold !—Peace !

Menenius. What is about to be !—I am out of breath ;

Confusion's near ; I cannot speak. You, tribunes

To the people ! Coriolanus, patience ! 190

Speak, good Sicinius.

Sicinius. Hear me, people ; peace !

Citizens. Let's hear our tribune :—Peace !—Speak, speak, speak.

Sicinius. You are at point to lose your liberties :

Marcus would have all from you ; Marcus,

Whom late you have nam'd for consul.

Menenius. Fie, fie ! fie ! 195

This is the way to kindle, not to quench.

First Senator. To unbuild the city and to lay all flat.

Sicinius. What is the city but the people ?

Citizens. True,

The people are the city.

Brutus. By the consent of all, we were established 200

The people's magistrates.

Citizens. You so remain.

Menenius. And so are like to do.

Cominius. That is the way to lay the city flat ;

To bring the roof to the foundation, 205

And bury all, which yet distinctly ranges,

In heaps and piles of ruin.

Sicinius. This deserves death.

Brutus. Or let us stand to our authority,

Or let us lose it. We do here pronounce,

Upon the part o' the people, in whose power

We were elected theirs, Marcus is worthy 210

Of present death.

Sicinius. Therefore lay hold of him ;

Bear him to the rock Tarpeian, and from thence

Into destruction cast him.

Brutus. Ædiles, seize him !

Citizens. Yield, Marcius, yield !

Menenius. Hear me one word ;

Beseech you, tribunes, hear me but a word. 215

Ædiles. Peace, peace !

Menenius. Be that you seem, truly your country's friends,
And temperately proceed to what you would
Thus violently redress.

Brutus. Sir, those cold ways,
That seem like prudent helps, are very poisonous 220
Where the disease is violent. Lay hands upon him,
And bear him to the rock.

Coriolanus. No, I'll die here.

[*Drawing his sword.*]

There's some among you have beheld me fighting :
Come, try upon yourselves what you have seen me.

Menenius. Down with that sword ! Tribunes, withdraw
awhile. 225

Brutus. Lay hands upon him.

Menenius. Help Marcius, help,
You that be noble ; help him, young and old !

Citizens. Down with him !—down with him !

[*In this mutiny the Tribunes, the Ædiles,
and the People are beat in.*]

Menenius. Go, get you to your house ; be gone, away !
All will be naught else.

Second Senator. Get you gone.

Coriolanus. Stand fast ; 230

We have as many friends as enemies.

Menenius. Shall it be put to that ?

First Senator. The gods forbid !

I prithee, noble friend, home to thy house ;
Leave us to cure this cause.

Menenius. For 'tis a sore upon us,
You cannot tent yourself : be gone, beseech you. 235

Cominius. Come, sir, along with us.

Coriolanus. I would they were barbarians,—as they are,
Though in Rome litter'd,—not Romans,—as they are not,
Though calv'd i' the porch o' the Capitol,—

Menenius. Be gone ;
Put not your worthy rage into your tongue ; 240
One time will owe another.

Coriolanus. On fair ground
I could beat forty of them.

Menenius.

I could myself

Take up a brace o' the best of them ; yea, the two tribunes.

Cominius. But now 'tis odds beyond arithmetic ;

And manhood is call'd foolery when it stands 245

Against a falling fabric. Will you hence,

Before the tag return ? whose rage doth rend

Like interrupted waters and o'erbear

What they are us'd to bear.

Menenius.

Pray you, be gone.

I'll try whether my old wit be in request 250

With those that have but little : this must be patch'd

With cloth of any colour.

Cominius.

Nay, come away.

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, and Others.*]

First Patrician. This man has marr'd his fortune.

Menenius. His nature is too noble for the world :

He would not flatter Neptune for his trident, 255

Or Jove for's power to thunder. His heart's his mouth :

What his breast forges, that his tongue must vent ;

And, being angry, does forget that ever

He heard the name of death.

[*A noise within.*]

Here's goodly work !

Second Patrician. I would they were a-bed ! 260

Menenius. I would they were in Tiber ! What the vengeance !

Could he not speak 'em fair ?

Re-enter BRUTUS and SICINIUS, with the rabble.

Sicinius.

Where is this viper

That would depopulate the city and

Be every man himself ?

Menenius.

You worthy tribunes,—

Sicinius. He shall be thrown down the Tarpeian rock 265

With rigorous hands : he hath resisted law,

And therefore law shall scorn him further trial

Than the severity of the public power,

Which he so sets at nought.

First Citizen.

He shall well know

The noble tribunes are the people's mouths, 270

And we their hands.

Citizens.

He shall, sure on't.

Menenius.

Sir, sir,—

Sicinius. Peace !

Menenius. Do not cry havoc, where you should but hunt

With modest warrant.

Sicinius. Sir, how comes't that you
Have help to make this rescue ?

Menenius. Hear me speak : 275
As I do know the consul's worthiness,
So can I name his faults.

Sicinius. Consul ! what consul ?

Menenius. The Consul Coriolanus.

Brutus. He consul !

Citizens. No, no, no, no, no. 279

Menenius. If, by the tribunes' leave, and yours, good people,
I may be heard, I would crave a word or two,
The which shall turn you to no further harm
Than so much loss of time.

Sicinius. Speak briefly then ;
For we are peremptory to dispatch
This viperous traitor. To eject him hence 285
Were but one danger, and to keep him here
Our certain death ; therefore it is decreed
He dies to-night.

Menenius. Now the good gods forbid
That our renowned Rome, whose gratitude
Towards her deserved children is enroll'd 290
In Jove's own book, like an unnatural dam
Should now eat up her own !

Sicinius. He's a disease that must be cut away.

Menenius. O ! he's a limb that has but a disease ;
Mortal to cut it off ; to cure it easy. 295
What has he done to Rome that's worthy death ?
Killing our enemies, the blood he hath lost,—
Which, I dare vouch, is more than that he hath
By many an ounce,—he dropp'd it for his country ;
And what is left, to lose it by his country, 300
Were to us all, that do't and suffer it,
A brand to th' end o' the world.

Sicinius. This is clean kam.

Brutus. Merely awry : when he did love his country
It honour'd him.

Menenius. The service of the foot
Being once gangren'd, is not then respected 305
For what before it was.

Brutus. We'll hear no more.
Pursue him to his house, and pluck him thence,
Lest his infection, being of catching nature,
Spread further.

Menenius. One word more, one word.
 This tiger-footed rage, when it shall find 310
 The harm of unseann'd swiftmess, will, too late,
 Tie leaden pounds to's heels. Proceed by process;
 Lest parties—as he is belov'd—break out,
 And sack great Rome with Romans.

Brutus. If 'twere so,—

Sicinius. What do ye talk? 315
 Have we not had a taste of his obedience?
 Our ædiles smote? ourselves resisted? Come!

Menenius. Consider this: he has been bred i' the wars
 Since he could draw a sword, and is ill school'd
 In bolted language; meal and bran together 320
 He throws without distinction. Give me leave,
 I'll go to him, and undertake to bring him
 Where he shall answer by a lawful form,—
 In peace,—to his utmost peril.

First Senator. Noble tribunes,
 It is the humane way: the other course 325
 Will prove too bloody, and the end of it
 Unknown to the beginning.

Sicinius. Noble Menenius,
 Be you then as the people's officer.
 Masters, lay down your weapons.

Brutus. Go not home.

Sicinius. Meet on the market-place. We'll attend you 330
 there:

Where, if you bring not Marcius, we'll proceed
 In our first way.

Menenius. I'll bring him to you.
 [*To the Senators.*] Let me desire your company. He must
 come,
 Or what is worst will follow.

First Senator. Pray you, let's to him.
 [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Same. A Room in CORIOLANUS'S House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS and Patricians.

Coriolanus. Let them pull all about mine ears; present me
 Death on the wheel, or at wild horses' heels;
 Or pile ten hills on the Tarpeian rock,
 That the precipitation might down stretch

Below the beam of sight ; yet will I still
Be thus to them. 5

First Patrician. You do the nobler.

Coriolanus. I muse my mother
Does not approve me further, who was wont
To call them woollen vassals, things created
To buy and sell with groats, to show bare heads 10
In congregations, to yawn, be still, and wonder,
When one but of my ordinance stood up
To speak of peace or war.

Enter VOLUMNIA.

I talk of you :
Why did you wish me milder ? Would you have me
False to my nature ? Rather say I play 15
The man I am.

Volumnia. O ! sir, sir, sir,
I would have had you put your power well on
Before you had worn it out.

Coriolanus. Let go.

Volumnia. You might have been enough the man you are
With striving less to be so : lesser had been 20
The thwarting of your dispositions if
You had not show'd them how you were dispos'd,
Ere they lack'd power to cross you.

Coriolanus. Let them hang.

Volumnia. Ay, and burn too.

Enter MENENIUS and SENATORS.

Menenius. Come, come ; you have been too rough, some-
thing too rough ; 25
You must return and mend it.

First Senator. There's no remedy ;
Unless, by not so doing, our good city
Cleave in the midst, and perish.

Volumnia. Pray be counsell'd.
I have a heart of mettle apt as yours,
But yet a brain that leads my use of anger 30
To better vantage.

Menenius. Well said, noble woman !
Before he should thus stoop to the herd, but that
The violent fit o' the time craves it as physic
For the whole state, I would put mine armour on,
Which I can scarcely bear.

Coriolanus What must I do ? 35

Menenius. Return to the tribunes.

Coriolanus. Well, what then ? what then ?

Menenius. Repent what you have spoke.

Coriolanus. For them ! I cannot do it to the gods ;
Must I then do't to them ?

Voluntaria. You are too absolute :

Though therein you can never be too noble, 40

But when extremities speak. I have heard you say,

Honour and policy, like unsever'd friends,

I the war do grow together: grant that, and tell me,

In peace what each of them by th' other lose,

That they combine not there.

Coriolanus. Tush, tush !

Menenius. A good demand.

Columnia. If it be honour in your wars to seem 46

The same you are not,—which, for your best ends,

You adopt your policy,—how is it less or worse,

That it shall hold companionship in peace

With honour, as in war, since that to both 50

It stands in like request ?

Coriolanus. Why force you this?

Polunnia. Because that now it lies you on to speak

To the people; not by your own instruction,

Nor by the matter which your heart prompts you,

But with such words that are but rooted in

Your tongue, of no allowance to your bosom's truth.

Now, this no more dishonours you at all

Than to take in a town with gentle words,

Which else would put you to your fortune and 60

The hazard of much blood.

I would dissemble with my nature where

My fortunes and my friends at stake requir'd

I should do so in honour: I am in this,

Your wife, your son, these senators, the nobles ; 65

And you will rather show our general louts

How you can frown than spend a fawn upon 'em,

For the inheritance of their loves and safeguard

Of what that want might ruin.

Menenius. Noble lady!

Come, go with us : speak fair ; you may salve so, 70
 No more shall we be vex'd with you ;

Not what is dangerous present, but the loss

Of what is past.

Columnia. I prithee now, my son,

Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand ;
 And thus far having stretch'd it,—here be with them,—
 Thy knee bussing the stones,—for in such business 75
 Action is eloquence, and the eyes of the ignorant
 More learned than the ears,—waving thy head,
 Which often, thus, correcting thy stout heart,
 Now humble as the ripest mulberry
 That will not hold the handling : or say to them, 80
 Thou art their soldier, and being bred in broils
 Hast not the soft way which, thou dost confess,
 Were fit for thee to use as they to claim,
 In asking their good loves ; but thou wilt frame
 Thyself, forsooth, hereafter theirs, so far 85
 As thou hast power and person.

Menenius. This but done,
 Even as she speaks, why, their hearts were yours ;
 For they have pardons, being ask'd, as free
 As words to little purpose.

Volumnia. Prithee now,
 Go, and be rul'd ; although I know thou hadst rather 90
 Follow thine enemy in a fiery gulf
 Than flatter him in a bower. Here is Cominius.

Enter COMINIUS.

Cominius. I have been i' the market-place ; and, sir, 'tis fit
 You make strong party, or defend yourself
 By calmness or by absence : all's in anger. 95

Menenius. Only fair speech.

Cominius. I think 'twill serve if he
 Can thereto frame his spirit.

Volumnia. He must, and will.
 Prithee now, say you will, and go about it.

Coriolanus. Must I go show them my unbarb'd sence ?
 Must I

With my base tongue give to my noble heart 100
 A lie that it must bear ? Well, I will do 't :
 Yet, were there but this single plot to lose,
 This mould of Marcius, they to dust should grind it,
 And throw 't against the wind. To the market-place !
 You have put me now to such a part which never 105
 I shall discharge to the life.

Cominius. Come, come, we'll prompt you.

Volumnia. I prithee now, sweet son, as thou hast said
 My praises made thee first a soldier, so,

To have my praise for this, perform a part
Thou hast not done before.

Coriolanus. Well, I must do't : 110

Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit ! My throat of war be turn'd,
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe
Small as a eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep ! The smiles of knaves 115
Tent in my cheeks, and school-boys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight ! A beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my arm'd knees,
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath receiv'd an alms ! I will not do't, 120
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.

Volumnia. At thy choice then :
To beg of thee it is my more dishonour
Than thou of them. Come all to ruin ; let 125
Thy mother rather feel thy pride than fear
Thy dangerous stoutness, for I mock at death
With as big heart as thou. Do as thou list,
Thy valiantness was mine, thou suck'dst it from me,
But owe thy pride thyself.

Coriolanus. Pray, be content : 130
Mother, I am going to the market-place ;
Chide me no more. I'll mountebank their loves,
Cog their hearts from them, and come home belov'd
Of all the trades in Rome. Look, I am going :
Commend me to my wife. I'll return consul, 135
Or never trust to what my tongue can do
I' the way of flattery further.

Volumnia. Do your will. [Exit.

Cominius. Away ! the tribunes do attend you : arm your-
self

To answer mildly ; for they are prepar'd
With accusations, as I hear, more strong 140
Than are upon you yet.

Coriolanus. The word is 'mildly.' Pray you, let us go :
Let them accuse me by invention, I
Will answer in mine honour,

Menenius. Ay, but mildly.

Coriolanus. Well, mildly be it then. Mildly ! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*The Same. The Forum.**Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.*

Brutus. In this point charge him home, that he affects
Tyrannical power : if he evade us there,
Enforce him with his envy to the people,
And that the spoil got on the Antiates
Was ne'er distributed.—

5

Enter an Ædile.

What, will he come?

Ædile.

He's coming.

Brutus.

How accompanied?

Ædile. With old Menenius, and those senators
That always favour'd him.

Sicinius.

Have you a catalogue
Of all the voices that we have procur'd,
Set down by the poll?

Ædile.

I have; 'tis ready.

10

Sicinius. Have you collected them by tribes?*Ædile.*

I have.

Sicinius. Assemble presently the people hither;
And when they hear me say, 'It shall be so,
I' the right and strength o' the commons,' be it either
For death, for fine, or banishment, then let them,
If I say, fine, cry 'fine,'—if death, cry 'death,'
Insisting on the old prerogative
And power i' the truth o' the cause.

15

Ædile.

I shall inform them.

Brutus. And when such time they have begun to cry,
Let them not cease, but with a din confus'd
Enforce the present execution
Of what we chance to sentence.

20

Ædile.

Very well.

Sicinius. Make them be strong and ready for this hint,
When we shall hap to give't them.

Brutus.

Go about it.

[*Exit Ædile.*]

Put him to choler straight. He hath been us'd
Ever to conquer, and to have his worth
Of contradiction : being once chaf'd, he cannot
Be rein'd again to temperance ; then he speaks
What's in his heart : and that is there which looks
With us to break his neck.

25

Sicinius.

Well, here he comes.

30

Enter CORIOLANUS, MENENIUS, COMINIUS, Senators, and Patricians.

Menenius. Calmly, I do beseech you.

Coriolanus. Ay, as an ostler, that for the poorest piece
Will bear the knave by the volume. The honour'd gods
Keep Rome in safety, and the chairs of justice
Supplied with worthy men! plant love among's! 35
Throng our large temples with the shows of peace,
And not our streets with war!

First Senator. Amen, amen.

Menenius. A noble wish.

Re-enter Ædile, with Citizens.

Sicinius. Draw near, ye people.

Ædile. List to your tribunes; audience; peace! I say.

Coriolanus. First, hear me speak.

Both Tribunes. Well, say. Peace, ho! 40

Coriolanus. Shall I be charg'd no further than this present?
Must all determine here?

Sicinius. I do demand,
If you submit you to the people's voices,
Allow their officers, and are content
To suffer lawful censure for such faults 45
As shall be prov'd upon you?

Coriolanus. I am content.

Menenius. Lo! citizens, he says he is content:
The war-like service he has done, consider; think
Upon the wounds his body bears, which show
Like graves i' the holy churchyard.

Coriolanus. Scratches with briers, 50
Sears to move laughter only.

Menenius. Consider further,
That when he speaks not like a citizen,
You find him like a soldier: do not take
His rougher accents for malicious sounds,
But, as I say, such as become a soldier, 55
Rather than envy you.

Cominius. Well, well; no more.

Coriolanus. What is the matter,
That being pass'd for consul with full voice
I am so dishonour'd that the very hour
You take it off again?

Sicinius. Answer to us. 60

Coriolanus. Say, then: 'tis true, I ought so.

Sicinius. We charge you, that you have contriv'd to take
From Rome all season'd office, and to wind
Yourself into a power tyrannical;
For which you are a traitor to the people. 65

Coriolanus. How! Traitor!

Menenius. Nay, temperately; your promise.

Coriolanus. The fires i' the lowest hell fold-in the people!
Call me their traitor! Thou injurious tribune!
Within thine eyes sat twenty thousand deaths,
In thy hands clutch'd as many millions, in 70
Thy lying tongue both numbers, I would say
'Thou liest' unto thee with a voice as free
As I do pray the gods.

Sicinius. Mark you this, people?

Citizens. To the rock!—to the rock with him!

Sicinius. Peace!

We need not put new matter to his charge: 75
What you have seen him do, and heard him speak,
Beating your officers, cursing yourselves,
Opposing laws with strokes, and here defying
Those whose great power must try him; even this,
So criminal and in such capital kind, 80
Deserves the extremest death.

Brutus. But since he hath

Serv'd well for Rome,—

Coriolanus. What do you prate of service?

Brutus. I talk of that, that know it.

Coriolanus. You!

Menenius. Is this the promise that you made your mother?

Cominius. Know, I pray you,—

Coriolanus. I'll know no further:

Let them pronounce the steep Tarpeian death, 86
Vagabond exile, flaying, pent to linger
But with a grain a day, I would not buy
Their mercy at the price of one fair word,
Nor check my courage for what they can give, 90
To have 't with saying 'Good morrow.'

Sicinius. For that he has,—

As much as in him lies,—from time to time
Envied against the people, seeking means
To pluck away their power, as now at last
Given hostile strokes, and that not in the presence 95
Of dreaded justice, but on the ministers
That do distribute it; in the name o' the people,

And in the power of us the tribunes, we,
 Even from this instant, banish him our city,
 In peril of precipitation 100
 From off the rock Tarpeian, never more
 To enter our Rome gates : i' the people's name,
 I say, it shall be so.

Citizens. It shall be so,—It shall be so,—Let him away.—
 He's banish'd, and it shall be so. 105

Cominius. Hear me, my masters, and my common friends,—

Sicinius. He's sentenc'd ; no more hearing.

Cominius. Let me speak :

I have been consul, and can show for Rome
 Her enemies' marks upon me. I do love
 My country's good with a respect more tender, 110
 More holy, and profound, than mine own life,
 My dear wife's estimate, her womb's increase,
 And treasure of my loins ; then if I would
 Speak that—

Sicinius. We know your drift : speak what ?

Brutus. There's no more to be said, but he is banish'd, 115
 As enemy to the people and his country :
 It shall be so.

Citizens. It shall be so,—it shall be so.

Coriolanus. You common cry of curs ! whose breath I hate
 As reek o' the rotten fens, whose loves I prize
 As the dead carcases of unburied men 120
 That do corrupt my air, I banish you ;
 And here remain with your uncertainty !
 Let every feeble rumour shake your hearts !
 Your enemies, with nodding of their plumes,
 Fan you into despair ! Have the power still 125
 To banish your defenders ; till at length
 Your ignorance,—which finds not, till it feels,—
 Making but reservation of yourselves,—
 Still your own foes,—deliver you as most
 Abated captives to some nation 130
 That won you without blows ! Despising,
 For you, the city, thus I turn my back :
 There is a world elsewhere.

[*Exeunt* CORIOLANUS, COMINIUS, MENENIUS, Senators,
 and Patricians.]

Edile. The people's enemy is gone, is gone !

Citizens. Our enemy is banish'd !—he is gone !—Hoo ! hoo !
 [They all shout and throw up their caps.]

Sicinius. Go, see him out at gates, and follow him, 136
As he hath follow'd you, with all despite ;
Give him deserv'd vexation. Let a guard
Attend us through the city.

Citizens. Come, come,—let us see him out at gates ! come !
The gods preserve our noble tribunes ! Come ! | *Exeunt.*

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Rome. Before a Gate of the City.*

*Enter CORIOLANUS, VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, MENENIUS, COMINIUS,
and several young Patricians.*

Coriolanus. Come, leave your tears : a brief farewell : the
beast

With many heads butts me away. Nay, mother,
Where is your ancient courage ! you were us'd,
To say extremity was the trier of spirits ;
That common chances common men could bear : 5
That when the sea was calm all boats alike
Show'd mastership in floating ; fortune's blows,
When most struck home, being gentle wounded, craves
A noble cunning : you were us'd to load me
With precepts that would make invincible 10
The heart that conn'd them.

Virgilia. O heavens ! O heavens !

Coriolanus. Nay, I prithee, woman,—

Volumnia. Now the red pestilence strike all trades in Rome,
And occupations perish !

Coriolanus. What, what, what !

I shall be lov'd when I am lack'd. Nay, mother, 15
Resume that spirit, when you were wont to say,
If you had been the wife of Hercules,
Six of his labours you'd have done, and sav'd
Your husband so much sweat. Cominius,
Droop not ; adieu. Farewell, my wife ! my mother ! 20
I'll do well yet. Thou old and true Menenius,
Thy tears are salter than a younger man's,
And venomous to thine eyes. My sometime general,
I have seen thee stern, and thou hast oft beheld
Heart-hardening spectacles ; tell these sad women 25
'Tis fond to wail inevitable strokes

As 'tis to laugh at them. My mother, you wot well
My hazards still have been your solace : and

Believe 't not lightly,—though I go alone
 Like to a lonely dragon, that his fen 30
 Makes fear'd and talk'd of more than seen,—your son
 Will or exceed the common or be caught
 With cautelous baits and practice.

Volumnia. My first son,
 Whither wilt thou go? Take good Cominius
 With thee awhile: determine on some course, 35
 More than a wild exposure to each chance
 That starts i' the way before thee.

Coriolanus. O the gods!
Cominius. I'll follow thee a month, devise with thee
 Where thou shalt rest, that thou mayst hear of us,
 And we of thee: so, if the time thrust forth 40
 A cause for thy repeal, we shall not send
 O'er the vast world to seek a single man,
 And lose advantage, which doth ever cool
 I' the absence of the needer.

Coriolanus. Fare ye well:
 Thou hast years upon thee; and thou art too full 45
 Of the wars' surfeits, to go rove with one
 That's yet unbruise'd: bring me but out at gate.
 Come, my sweet wife, my dearest mother, and
 My friends of noble touch, when I am forth,
 Bid me farewell, and smile. I pray you, come. 50
 While I remain above the ground you shall
 Hear from me still; and never of me aught
 But what is like me formerly.

Menenius. That's worthily
 As any ear can hear. Come, let's not weep.
 If I could shake off but one seven years 55
 From these old arms and legs, by the good gods,
 I'd with thee every foot.

Coriolanus. Give me thy hand:
 Come. [Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*The Same. A Street near the Gate.*

Enter SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and an Ædile.

Sicinius. Bid them all home: he's gone, and we'll no
 further.
 The nobility are vex'd, whom we see have sided
 In his behalf.

Brutus. Now we have shown our power,

Let us seem humbler after it is done
Than when it was a-doing.

Sicinius. Bid them home ; 5

Say their great enemy is gone, and they
Stand in their ancient strength.

Brutus. Dismiss them home.
[*Erit* Ædile.]

Enter VOLUMNIA, VIRGILIA, and MENENIUS.

Here comes his mother.

Sicinius. Let's not meet her.

Brutus. Why ?

Sicinius. They say she's mad.

Brutus. They have ta'en note of us : keep on your way.

Volumnia. O ! you're well met. The hoarded plague o'
the gods 11

Requite your love !

Menenius. Peace, peace ! be not so loud.

Volumnia. If that I could for weeping, you should hear,—
Nay, and you shall hear some. [*To BRUTUS.*] Will you be
gone ?

Virgilia. [*To SICINIUS.*] You shall stay too. I would I had
the power 15

To say so to my husband.

Sicinius. Are you mankind ?

Volumnia. Ay, fool ; is that a shame ! Note but this fool.
Was not a man my father ? Hadst thou foxship
To banish him that struck more blows for Rome
Than thou hast spoken words ?

Sicinius. O blessed heavens ! 20

Volumnia. More noble blows than ever thou wise words ;
And for Rome's good. I'll tell thee what ; yet go :
Nay, but thou shalt stay too : I would my son
Were in Arabia, and thy tribe before him,
His good sword in his hand.

Sicinius. What then ?

Volumnia. What then ! 25

He'd make an end of thy posterity.

Virgilia. Good man, the wounds that he does bear for
Rome !

Menenius. Come, come : peace !

Sicinius. I would he had continu'd to his country 30
As he began, and not unknit himself
The noble knot he made.

Brutus. I would he had.

Volumnia. 'I would he had!' 'Twas you incens'd the rabble :
Cats, that can judge as fitly of his worth
As I can of those mysteries which heaven
Will not have earth to know. 35

Brutus. Pray, let us go.

Volumnia. Now, pray, sir, get you gone :
You have done a brave deed. Ere you go, hear this :
As far as doth the Capitol exceed
The meanest house in Rome, so far my son,— 40
This lady's husband here, this, do you see,—
Whom you have banish'd, does exceed you all.

Brutus. Well, well, we'll leave you.

Sicinius. Why stay we to be baited
With one that wants her wits ?

Volumnia Take my prayers with you.
[*Exeunt Tribunes.*

I would the gods had nothing else to do 45
But to confirm my curses ! Could I meet 'em
But once a day, it would unclog my heart
Of what lies heavy to't.

Menenius. You have told them home,
And, by my troth, you have cause. You'll sup with me ?

Volumnia. Anger's my meat ; I sup upon myself, 50
And so shall starve with feeding. Come, let's go.

Leave this faint puling and lament as I do,

In anger, Juno-like. Come, come, come.

Menenius. Fie, fie, fie ! [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—A Highway between Rome and Antium.

Enter a Roman and a Volsce, meeting.

Roman. I know you well, sir, and you know me : your
name I think is Adrian.

Volsce. It is so, sir : truly, I have forgot you.

Roman. I am a Roman ; and my services are, as you 5
are, against 'em : know you me yet ?

Volsce. Nicanor ? No.

Roman. The same, sir.

Volsce. You had more beard, when I last saw you ; but
your favour is well approved by your tongue. What's 10
the news in Rome ? I have a note from the Volscean state
to find you out there : you have well saved me a day's
journey.

Roman. There hath been in Rome strange insurrections : the people against the senators, patricians, and nobles. 15

Volsce. Hath been ! Is it ended then ? Our state thinks not so ; they are in a most war-like preparation, and hope to come upon them in the heat of their division.

Roman. The main blaze of it is past, but a small thing would make it flame again. For the nobles receive so to heart the banishment of that worthy Coriolanus, that they are in a ripe aptness to take all power from the people and to pluck from them their tribunes for ever. This lies glowing, I can tell you, and is almost mature for the violent breaking out. 20 25

Volsce. Coriolanus banished !

Roman. Banished, sir.

Volsce. You will be welcome with this intelligence, Nicanor. 30

Roman. The day serves well for them now. Your noble Tullus Aufidius will appear well in these wars, his great opposer, Coriolanus, being now in no request of his country. 35

Volsce. He cannot choose. I am most fortunate, thus accidentally to encounter you : you have ended my business, and I will merrily accompany you home. 40

Roman. I shall, between this and supper, tell you most strange things from Rome ; all tending to the good of their adversaries. Have you an army ready, say you ? 45

Volsce. A most royal one : the centurions and their charges distinctly billeted, already in the entertainment, and to be on foot at an hour's warning. 50

Roman. I am joyful to hear of their readiness, and am the man, I think, that shall set them in present action. So sir, heartily well met, and most glad of your company.

Volsce. You take my part from me, sir ; I have the most cause to be glad of yours. 55

Roman. Well, let us go together. [Exeunt.]

SCENE IV.—*Antium. Before AUFIDIUS' House.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, in mean apparel, disguised and muffled.

Coriolanus. A goodly city is this Antium. City, 'Tis I that made thy widows : many an heir Of these fair edifices 'fore my wars

Have I heard groan and drop : then, know me not,
 Lest that thy wives with spits and boys with stones 5
 In puny battle slay me.

Enter a Citizen.

Save you, sir.

Citizen. And you.

Coriolanus. Direct me, if it be your will,
 Where great Aufidius lies. Is he in Antium ?

Citizen. He is, and feasts the nobles of the state
 At his house this night.

Coriolanus. Which is his house, beseech you ? 10

Citizen. This, here before you.

Coriolanus. Thank you, sir. Farewell.
 [*Exit Citizen.*]

O world ! thy slippery turns. Friends now fast sworn,
 Whose double bosoms seem to wear one heart,
 Whose hours, whose bed, whose meal, and exercise,
 Are still together, who twin, as 'twere, in love 15
 Unseparable, shall within this hour,
 On a dissension of a doit, break out
 To bitterest enmity : so, fellest foes,
 Whose passions and whose plots have broke their sleep
 To take the one the other, by some chance, 20
 Some trick not worth an egg, shall grow dear friends
 And interjoin their issues. So with me :
 My birth-place hate I, and my love's upon
 This enemy town. I'll enter : if he slay me,
 He does fair justice : if he give me way, 25
 I'll do his country service. [*Exit.*]

SCENE V.—*The Same. A Hall in AUFIDIUS' House.*

Music within. Enter a Servingman.

First Servingman. Wine, wine, wine ! What service
 is here ! I think our fellows are asleep. [*Exit.*]

Enter a Second Servingman.

Second Servingman. Where's Cotus ? my master calls
 for him. Cotus ! [*Exit.*]

Enter CORIOLANUS.

Coriolanus. A goodly house : the feast smells well ; but I
 Appear not like a guest.

Re-enter the First Servingman.

First Servingman. What would you have, friend ?
Whence are you ? Here's no place for you : pray, go to
the door. *[Exit.*

Coriolanus. I have deserv'd no better entertainment, 10
In being Coriolanus.

Re-enter Second Servingman.

Second Servingman. Whence are you, sir ? Has the
porter his eyes in his head, that he gives entrance to such
companions ? Pray, get you out.

Coriolanus. Away ! 15

Second Servingman. ' Away ! ' Get you away.

Coriolanus. Now, thou art troublesome.

Second Servingman. Are you so brave ! I'll have you
talked with anon.

Enter a Third Servingman. Re-enter the First.

Third Servingman. What fellow's this ? 20

First Servingman. A strange one as ever I looked on :
I cannot get him out o' the house : prithee, call my master
to him.

Third Servingman. What have you to do here, fellow ?
Pray you, avoid the house. 25

Coriolanus. Let me but stand ; I will not hurt your
hearth.

Third Servingman. What are you ?

Coriolanus. A gentleman.

Third Servingman. A marvellous poor one. 30

Coriolanus. True, so I am.

Third Servingman. Pray you, poor gentleman, take up
some other station ; here's no place for you ; pray you,
avoid : come.

Coriolanus. Follow your function ; go, and batten on 35
cold bits. *[Pushes him away.*

Third Servingman. What, you will not ? Prithee, tell
my master what a strange guest he has here.

Second Servingman. And I shall. *[Exit.*

Third Servingman. Where dwell'st thou ? 40

Coriolanus. Under the canopy.

Third Servingman. ' Under the canopy ! '

Coriolanus. Ay.

Third Servingman. Where's that ?

Coriolanus. I the city of kites and crows 45

Third Servingman. 'T the city of kites and crows !
What an ass it is ! Then thou dwell'st with daws too !

Coriolanus. No ; I serve not thy master.

Third Servingman. How sir ! Do you meddle with my 50
master !

Coriolanus. Ay ; 'tis an honest service than to meddle
with thy mistress.
Thou prat'st, and prat'st : serve with thy trencher. Hence.
[*Beats him away.*]

Enter AUDIFIDIUS and First Servingman.

Aufidius. Where is this fellow ? 55

Second Servingman. Here, sir : I'd have beaten him
like a dog, but for disturbing the lords within.

Aufidius. Whence com'st thou ? what wouldst thou ?
Thy name ?

Why speak'st not ? Speak, man : what's thy name ?

Coriolanus. [*Unmuffling.*] If, Tullus, 60
Not yet thou know'st me, and, seeing me, dost not
Think me for the man I am, necessity
Commands me name myself.

Aufidius. What is thy name ?

[*Servants retire.*]

Coriolanus. A name unmusical to the Volscians' ears,
And harsh in sound to thine.

Aufidius. Say, what's thy name ? 65
Thou hast a grim appearance, and thy face
Bears a command in't ; though thy tackle's torn,
Thou show'st a noble vessel. What's thy name ?

Coriolanus. Prepare thy brow to frown. Know'st thou me yet ?

Aufidius. I know thee not. Thy name ? 70

Coriolanus. My name is Caius Marcius, who hath done
To thee particularly, and to all the Volscies,
Great hurt and mischief ; thereto witness may
My surname, Coriolanus : the painful service,
The extreme dangers, and the drops of blood 75
Shed for my thankless country, are requited
But with that surname ; a good memory,
And witness of the malice and displeasure
Which thou shouldst bear me : only that name remains ;
The cruelty and envy of the people, 80
Permitted by our dastard nobles, who
Have all forsook me, hath devour'd the rest ;

And suffer'd me by the voice of slaves to be
 Hoop'd out of Rome. Now this extremity
 Hath brought me to thy hearth ; not out of hope,— 85
 Mistake me not,—to save my life ; for if
 I had fear'd death, of all the men i' the world
 I would have 'voided thee ; but in mere spite,
 To be full quit of those my banishers,
 Stand I before thee here. Then if thou hast 90
 A heart of wreak in thee, that will revenge
 Thine own particular wrongs and stop those maims
 Of shame seen through thy country, speed thee straight,
 And make my misery serve thy turn : so use it,
 That my revengeful services may prove 95
 As benefits to thee ; for I will fight
 Against my canker'd country with the spleen
 Of all the under fiends. But if so be
 Thou dar'st not this, and that to prove more fortunes
 Thou art tir'd, then, in a word, I also am 100
 Longer to live most weary, and present
 My throat to thee and to thy ancient malice ;
 Which not to cut would show thee but a fool,
 Since I have ever follow'd thee with hate,
 Drawn tuns of blood out of thy country's breast, 105
 And cannot live but to thy shame, unless
 It be to do thee service.

Aufidius. O Marcius, Marcius !
 Each word thou hast spoke hath weeded from my heart
 A root of ancient envy. If Jupiter
 Should from yond cloud speak divine things, 110
 And say, ' 'Tis true,' I'd not believe them more
 Than thee, all noble Marcius. Let me twine
 Mine arms about that body, where against
 My grained ash a hundred times hath broke.
 And scarr'd the moon with splinters : here I clip 115
 The anvil of my sword, and do contest
 As hotly and as nobly with thy love
 As ever in ambitious strength I did
 Contend against thy valour. Know thou first,
 I lov'd the maid I married ; never man 120
 Sigh'd truer breath ; but that I see thee here,
 Thou noble thing ! more dances my rapt heart
 Than when I first my wedded mistress saw
 Bestride my threshold. Why, thou Mars ! I tell thee.
 We have a power on foot ; and I had purpose 125

Once more to hew thy target from thy brawn,
 Or lose mine arm for't. Thou hast beat me out
 Twelve several times, and I have nightly since
 Dreamt of encounters 'twixt thyself and me ;
 We have been down together in my sleep, 130
 Unbuckling helms, fisting each other's throat,
 And wak'd half dead with nothing. Worthy Marcius,
 Had we no quarrel else to Rome, but that
 Thou art thence banish'd, we would muster all
 From twelve to seventy, and, pouring war 135
 Into the bowels of ungrateful Rome,
 Like a bold flood o'er-bear. O ! come : go in,
 And take our friendly senators by the hands,
 Who now are here, taking their leaves of me,
 Who am prepar'd against your territories, 140
 Though not for Rome itself.

Coriolanus. You bless me, gods !

Aufidius. Therefore, most absolute sir, if thou wilt have
 The leading of thine own revenges, take
 The one half of my commission, and set down,
 As best thou art experienc'd, since thou know'st 145
 Thy country's strength and weakness, thine own ways ;
 Whether to knock against the gates of Rome,
 Or rudely visit them in parts remote,
 To fright them, ere destroy. But come in :
 Let me commend thee first to those that shall 150
 Say yea to thy desires. A thousand welcomes !
 And more a friend than e'er an enemy ;
 Yet, Marcius, that was much. Your hand : most welcome !

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.*

First Servingman. [*Advancing.*] Here's a strange altera- 155
 tion !

Second Servingman. By my hand, I had thought to
 have stricken him with a cudgel ; and yet my mind gave
 me his clothes made a false report of him.

First Servingman. What an arm he has ! He turned me 160
 about with his finger and his thumb, as one would set up
 a top.

Second Servingman. Nay, I knew by his face that there
 was something in him : he had, sir, a kind of face, me-
 thought,—I cannot tell how to term it. 165

First Servingman. He had so ; looking as it were,—
 would I were hanged but I thought there was more in him
 than I could think.

Second Servingman. So did I, I'll be sworn : he is simply the rarest man i' the world. 170

First Servingman. I think he is ; but a greater soldier than he, you wot one.

Second Servingman. Who ? my master ?

First Servingman. Nay, it's no matter for that.

Second Servingman. Worth six on him. 175

First Servingman. Nay, not so neither ; but I take him to be the greater soldier.

Second Servingman. Faith, look you, one cannot tell how to say that : for the defence of a town our general is excellent. 180

First Servingman. Ay, and for an assault too.

Re-enter Third Servingman.

Third Servingman. O slaves ! I can tell you news ; news, you rascals.

First Servingman. } What, what, what ? let's partake.
Second Servingman. }

Third Servingman. I would not be a Roman, of all nations ; I had as lief be a condemned man. 185

First Servingman. } Wherefore ? wherefore ?
Second Servingman. }

Third Servingman. Why, here's he that was wont to thwack our general, Caius Marcius.

First Servingman. Why do you say ' thwack our general ? ' 190

Third Servingman. I do not say, ' thwack our general : ' but he was always good enough for him.

Second Servingman. Come, we are fellows and friends : he was ever too hard for him : I have heard him say so himself. 195

First Servingman. He was too hard for him directly, to say the troth on't : before Corioli he scotched him and notched him like a carbonado.

Second Servingman. An he had been cannibally given, he might have broiled and eaten him too. 200

First Servingman. But, more of thy news.

Third Servingman. Why, he is so made on here within, as if he were son and heir to Mars ; set at upper end o' the table ; no question asked him by any of the senators, but they stand bald before him. Our general himself makes a mistress of him ; sanctifies himself with's hand, and turns up the white o' the eye to his discourse. But the bottom 205

of the news is, our general is cut i' the middle, and but one
half of what he was yesterday, for the other has half, by the
entreaty and grant of the whole table. He'll go, he says,
and sowle the porter of Rome gates by the ears : he will
mow down all before him, and leave his passage polled. 210

Second Servingman. And he's as like to do't as any man
I can imagine.

Third Servingman. Do't ! he will do't : for—look you,
sir—he has as many friends as enemies ; which friends, 220
sir—as it were—durst not—look you, sir—show them-
selves—as we term it—his friends, whilst he's in directitude.

First Servingman. Directitude ! what's that ?

Second Servingman. But when they shall see, sir, his 225
crest up again, and the man in blood, they will out of
their burrows, like conies after rain, and revel all with him.

First Servingman. But when goes this forward ?

Third Servingman. To-morrow ; to-day ; presently. 230
You shall have the drum struck up this afternoon ; 'tis,
as it were, a parcel of their feast, and to be executed ere
they wipe their lips.

Second Servingman. Why, then we shall have a stirring
world again. This peace is nothing but to rust iron, in- 235
crease tailors, and breed ballad-makers.

First Servingman. Let me have war, say I ; it exceeds
peace as far as day does night ; it's spritely, waking,
audible, and full of vent. Peace is a very apoplexy, 240
lethargy ; mulled, deaf, sleepy, insensible.

Second Servingman. 'Tis so.

First Servingman. Ay, and it makes men hate one 246
another.

Third Servingman. Reason : because they then less
need one another. The wars for my money. I hope to 250
see Romans as cheap as Volscians. They are rising,
they are rising.

All. In, in, in, in ! | *Exeunt.*

SCENE VI.—Rome. A Public Place.

Enter SICINIUS and BRUTUS.

Sicinius. We hear not of him, neither need we fear him :
His remedies are tame i' the present peace
And quietness o' the people, which before
Were in wild hurry. Here do we make his friends
Blush that the world goes well, who rather had,

Though they themselves did suffer by't, behold
 Dissentious numbers pestering streets, than see
 Our tradesmen singing in their shops and going
 About their functions friendly.

Enter MENENIUS.

Brutus. We stood to't in good time. Is this Menenius? 10

Sicinius. 'Tis he, 'tis he. O! he is grown most kind
 Of late. Hail, sir!

Menenius. Hail to you both!

Sicinius. Your Coriolanus is not much miss'd
 But with his friends: the commonwealth doth stand,
 And so would do, were he more angry at it. 15

Menenius. All's well: and might have been much better, if
 He could have temporiz'd.

Sicinius. Where is he, hear you?

Menenius. Nay, I hear nothing: his mother and his wife
 Hear nothing from him.

Enter three or four Citizens.

Citizens. The gods preserve you both!

Sicinius. Good den, our neighbours. 20

Brutus. Good den to you all, good den to you all.

First Citizen. Ourselves, our wives, and children, on our
 knees,
 Are bound to pray for you both.

Sicinius. Live, and thrive!

Brutus. Farewell, kind neighbours: we wish'd Coriolanus
 Had lov'd you as we did.

Citizens. Now the gods keep you! 25

Sicinius. Farewell, farewell. [*Exeunt Citizens.*]

Brutus.

Sicinius. This is a happier and more comely time
 Than when these fellows ran about the streets
 Crying confusion.

Brutus. Caius Marcius was
 A worthy officer i' the war; but insolent,
 O'ercome with pride, ambitious past all thinking,
 Self-loving,— 30

Sicinius. And affecting one sole throne,
 Without assistance.

Menenius. I think not so.

Sicinius. We should by this, to all our lamentation,
 If he had gone forth consul, found it so. 35

Brutus. The gods have well prevented it, and Rome
Sits safe and still without him.

Enter an Edile.

Edile. Worthy tribunes,
There is a slave, whom we have put in prison,
Reports, the Volscies with two several powers
Are enter'd in the Roman territories, 40
And with the deepest malice of the war
Destroy what lies before them.

Menenius. 'Tis Aufidius,
Who, hearing of our Marcius' banishment,
Thrusts forth his horns again into the world ;
Which were inshell'd when Marcius stood for Rome,
And durst not once peep out.

Sicinius. Come, what talk you of Marcius?

Brutus. Go see this rumourer whipp'd. It cannot be
The Volscies dare break with us.

Menenius. Cannot be !
We have record that very well it can, 50
And three examples of the like have been
Within my age. But reason with the fellow,
Before you punish him, where he heard this,
Lest you shall chance to whip your information,
And beat the messenger who bids beware 55
Of what is to be dreaded.

Sicinius. Tell not me :

I know this cannot be.

<i>Brutus</i>	Not possible.
---------------	---------------

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. The nobles in great earnestness are going
All to the senate-house: some news is come,
That turns their countenances.

Sicinius. 'Tis this slave.— 60
Go whip him 'fore the people's eyes : his raising ;
Nothing but his report.

Messenger. Yes, worthy sir,
The slave's report is seconded; and more,
More fearful, is deliver'd.

Sicinius. What more fearful?

Messenger. It is spoke freely out of many mouths— 65
How probable I do not know—that Marcius,
Join'd with Aufidius, leads a power 'gainst Rome.

And vows revenge as spacious as between
The young'st and oldest thing.

Sicinius. This is most likely.

Brutus. Rais'd only, that the weaker sort may wish 70
Good Marcius home again.

Sicinius. The very trick on't.

Menenius. This is unlikely :
He and Aufidius can no more atone,
Than violentest contrariety.

Enter another Messenger.

Second Messenger. You are sent for to the senate : 75
A fearful army, led by Caius Marcius,
Associated with Aufidius, rages
Upon our territories ; and have already
O'erborne their way, consum'd with fire, and took
What lay before them. 80

Enter COMINIUS.

Cominius. O ! you have made good work !

Menenius. What news ? what news ?

Cominius. You have help to ruin your own daughters, and
To melt the city leads upon your pates,
To see your wives dishonour'd to your noses,—

Menenius. What's the news ? what's the news ? 85

Cominius. Your temples burned in their cement, and
Your franchises, whereon you stood, confin'd
Into an auger's bore.

Menenius. Pray now, your news ?—

You have made fair work, I fear me. Pray, your news ?
If Marcius should be join'd with Volscians,—

Cominius. If ! 90

He is their god : he leads them like a thing
Made by some other deity than Nature,
That shapes man better ; and they follow him,
Against us brats, with no less confidence
Than boys pursuing summer butterflies, 95
Or butchers killing flies.

Menenius. You have made good work,
You, and your apron-men : you that stood so much
Upon the voice of occupation and
The breath of garlic-eaters !

Cominius. He will shake
Your Rome about your ears.

Menenius. As Hercules 100
Did shake down mellow fruit. You have made fair work !

Brutus. But is this true, sir !

Cominius. Ay ; and you'll look pale
Before you find it other. All the regions
Do smilingly revolt ; and who resist 105
Are mock'd for valiant ignorance,
And perish constant fools. Who is't can blame him ?
Your enemies, and his, find something in him.

Menenius. We are all undone unless
The noble man have mercy.

Cominius. Who shall ask it ?
The tribunes cannot do't for shame ; the people 110
Deserve such pity of him as the wolf
Does of the shepherds : for his best friends, if they
Should say, ' Be good to Rome,' they charg'd him even
As those should do that had deserv'd his hate,
And therein show'd like enemies.

Menenius. 'Tis true : 115
If he were putting to my house the brand
That should consume it, I have not the face
To say, ' Beseech you, cease.'—You have made fair hands,
You and your crafts ! you have crafted fair !

Cominius. You have brought
A trembling upon Rome, such as was never 120
So incapable of help.

Sicinius.)

Brutus.)

Say not we brought it.

Menenius. How ! Was it we ? We lov'd him ; but, like
beasts

And cowardly nobles, gave way unto your clusters,
Who did hoot him out o' the city.

Cominius. But I fear 125
They'll roar him in again. Tullus Aufidius,
The second name of men, obeys his points
As if he were his officer : desperation
Is all the policy, strength, and defence,
That Rome can make against them.

Enter a troop of Citizens.

Menenius. Here come the clusters.
And is Aufidius with him ? You are they 130
That made the air unwholesome, when you cast
Your stinking greasy caps in hooting at

Coriolanus' exile. Now he's coming ;
 And not a hair upon a soldier's head
 Which will not prove a whip : as many coxcombs 135
 As you threw caps up will he tumble down,
 And pay you for your voices. 'Tis no matter ;
 If he could burn us all into one coal,
 We have deserv'd it.

Citizens. Faith, we hear fearful news.

First Citizen. For mine own part, 140
 When I said banish him, I said 'twas pity.

Second Citizen. And so did I.

Third Citizen. And so did I ; and, to say the truth, so
 did very many of us. That we did we did for the best : 145
 and though we willingly consented to his banishment, yet
 it was against our will.

Cominius. Ye're goodly things, you voices !

Menenius. You have made
 Good work, you and your cry ! Shall's to the Capitol ?

Cominius. O ! ay ; what else ? 150

Exeunt COMINIUS and MENENIUS.

Sicinius. Go, masters, get you home ; be not dismay'd :
 These are a side that would be glad to have
 This true which they so seem to fear. Go home,
 And show no sign of fear.

First Citizen. The gods be good to us ! Come, masters, 155
 let's home. I ever said we were i' the wrong when we
 banished him.

Second Citizen. So did we all. But come, let's home.

Exeunt Citizens.

Brutus. I do not like this news.

Sicinius. Nor I. 160

Brutus. Let's to the Capitol. Would half my wealth
 Would buy this for a lie !

Sicinius. Pray let us go. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE VII.—*A Camp at a small distance from Rome.*

Enter AUFIDIUS and his Lieutenant.

Aufidius. Do they still fly to the Roman ?

Lieutenant. I do not know what witchcraft's in him, but
 Your soldiers use him as the grace 'fore meat,
 Their talk at table, and their thanks at end ;
 And you are darken'd in this action, sir, 5
 Even by your own.

Aufidius. I cannot help it now,
 Unless, by using means, I lame the foot
 Of our design. He bears himself more proudlier,
 Even to my person, than I thought he would
 When first I did embrace him ; yet his nature 10
 In that's no changeling, and I must excuse
 What cannot be amended.

Lieutenant. Yet, I wish, sir,—
 I mean for your particular,—you had not
 Join'd in commission with him ; but either had borne
 The action of yourself, or else to him 15
 Had left it solely.

Aufidius. I understand thee well ; and be thou sure,
 When he shall come to his account, he knows not
 What I can urge against him. Although it seems,
 And so he thinks, and is no less apparent 20
 To the vulgar eye, that he bears all things fairly,
 And shows good husbandry for the Volscian state,
 Fights dragon-like, and does achieve as soon
 As draw his sword ; yet he hath left undone
 That which shall break his neck or hazard mine, 25
 Whene'er we come to our account.

Lieutenant. Sir, I beseech you, think you he'll carry Rome ?

Aufidius. All places yield to him ere he sits down ;
 And the nobility of Rome are his :
 The senators and patricians love him too : 30
 The tribunes are no soldiers ; and their people
 Will be as rash in the repeal as hasty
 To expel him thence. I think he'll be to Rome
 As is the osprey to the fish, who takes it
 By sovereignty of nature. First he was 35
 A noble servant to them, but he could not
 Carry his honours even ; whether 'twas pride,
 Which out of daily fortune ever taints
 The happy man ; whether defect of judgment,
 To fail in the disposing of those chances 40
 Which he was lord of ; or whether nature,
 Not to be other than one thing, not moving
 From the casque to the cushion, but commanding peace
 Even with the same austerity and garb
 As he controll'd the war ; but one of these, 45
 As he hath spices of them all,—not all,
 For I dare so far free him,—made him fear'd,
 So hated, and so banish'd : but he has a merit

To choke it in the utterance. So our virtues
 Lie in the interpretation of the time ; 50
 And power, unto itself most commendable,
 Hath not a tomb so evident as a chair
 To extol what it hath done.
 One fire drives out one fire ; one nail, one nail ;
 Rights by rights falter, strengths by strengths do fail. 55
 Come, let's away. When, Caius, Rome is thine,
 Thou art poor'st of all ; then shortly art thou mine.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*Rome. A Public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS, COMINIUS, SICINIUS, BRUTUS, and Others.

Menenius. No, I'll not go : you hear what he hath said
 Which was sometime his general ; who lov'd him
 In a most dear particular. He call'd me father :
 But what o' that ? Go, you that banish'd him ;
 A mile before his tent fall down, and knee 5
 The way into his mercy. Nay, if he coy'd
 To hear Cominius speak, I'll keep at home.

Cominius. He would not seem to know me.

Menenius. Do you hear ?

Cominius. Yet one time he did call me by my name.
 I urg'd our old acquaintance, and the drops 10
 That we have bl'd together. Coriolanus
 He would not answer to ; forbad all names ;
 He was a kind of nothing, titleless,
 Till he had forg'd himself a name o' the fire
 Of burning Rome.

Menenius. Why, so : you have made good work ! 15
 A pair of tribunes that have rack'd for Rome,
 To make coals cheap : a noble memory !

Cominius. I minded him how royal 'twas to pardon
 When it was less expected : he replied,
 It was a bare petition of a state 20
 To one whom they had punish'd.

Menenius. Very well.
 Could he say less ?

Cominius. I offer'd to awaken his regard
 For's private friends : his answer to me was,
 He could not stay to pick them in a pile 25
 Of noisome musty chaff : he said 'twas folly,

For one poor grain or two, to leave unburnt,
And still to nose the offence.

Menenius. For one poor grain or two!
I am one of those : his mother, wife, his child,
And this brave fellow too, we are the grains : 30
You are the musty chaff, and you are smelt
Above the moon. We must be burnt for you.

Sicinius. Nay, pray, be patient : if you refuse your aid
In this so-never-needed help, yet do not
Upbraid's with our distress. But, sure, if you 35
Would be your country's pleader, your good tongue,
More than the instant army we can make,
Might stop our countryman.

Menenius. No ; I'll not meddle.

Sicinius. Pray you, go to him.

Menenius. What should I do ? 40

Brutus. Only make trial what your love can do
For Rome, towards Marcius.

Menenius. Well ; and say that Marcius
Return me, as Cominius is return'd,
Unheard ; what then ?

But as a discontented friend, grief-shot 45
With his unkindness ? say't be so ?

Sicinius. Yet your good will
Must have that thanks from Rome, after the measure
As you intended well.

Menenius. I'll undertake it :
I think he'll hear me. Yet, to bite his lip,
And hum at good Cominius, much unhearts me. 50
He was not taken well ; he had not din'd :
The veins unfill'd, our blood is cold, and then
We pout upon the morning, are unapt
To give or to forgive ; but when we have stuff'd
These pipes and these conveyances of our blood 55
With wine and feeding, we have suppler souls
Than in our priest-like fasts : therefore, I'll watch him
Till he be dieted to my request,
And then I'll set upon him.

Brutus. You know the very road into his kindness, 60
And cannot lose your way.

Menenius. Good faith, I'll prove him,
Speed how it will. I shall ere long have knowledge
Of my success. [Exit.

Cominius. He'll never hear him.

Sicinius.

Not !

Cominius. I tell you he does sit in gold, his eye
 Red as 'twould burn Rome, and his injury 65
 The gaoler to his pity. I kneel'd before him ;
 'Twas very faintly he said ' Rise ; ' dismiss'd me
 Thus, with his speechless hand : what he would do
 He sent in writing after me ; what he would not,
 Bound with an oath to yield to his conditions : 70
 So that all hope is vain
 Unless his noble mother and his wife,
 Who, as I hear, mean to solicit him
 For mercy to his country. Therefore let's hence,
 And with our fair entreaties haste them on. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*The Volscian Camp before Rome. The Guards at their stations.*

Enter to them, MENENIUS.

First Guard. Stay ! whence are you ?

Second Guard. Stand ! and go back.

Menenius. You guard like men ; 'tis well ; but, by your leave,
 I am an officer of state, and come
 To speak with Coriolanus

First Guard. From whence ?

Menenius. From Rome.

First Guard. You may not pass ; you must return : our
 general 5

Will no more hear from thence.

Second Guard. You'll see your Rome embrac'd with fire
 before

You'll speak with Coriolanus.

Menenius. Good my friends,

If you have heard your general talk of Rome,
 And of his friends there, it is lots to blanks 10
 My name hath touch'd your ears : it is Menenius.

First Guard. Be it so ; go back : the virtue of your name
 Is not here passable.

Menenius. I tell thee, fellow,
 Thy general is my lover : I have been
 The book of his good acts, whence men have read 15
 His fame unparallel'd, haply amplified ;
 For I have ever glorified my friends—
 Of whom he's chief—with all the size that verity
 Would without lapsing suffer : nay, sometimes,

Like to a bowl upon a subtle ground,
I have tumbled past the throw, and in his praise
Have almost stamp'd the leasing. Therefore, fellow,
I must have leave to pass. 20

First Guard. Faith, sir, if you had told as many lies in
his behalf as you have uttered words in your own, you
should not pass here : no, though it were as virtuous to lie
as to live chastely. Therefore go back. 25

Menenius. Prithee, fellow, remember my name is
Menenius, always factionary on the party of your general. 30

Second Guard. Howsoever you have been his liar—as
you say you have—I am one that, telling true under him,
must say you cannot pass. Therefore go back. 35

Menenius. Has he dined, canst thou tell ? for I would
not speak with him till after dinner.

First Guard. You are a Roman, are you ?

Menenius. I am as thy general is.

First Guard. Then you should hate Rome, as he does. 40
Can you, when you have pushed out your gates the very
defender of them, and, in a violent popular ignorance, given
your enemy your shield, think to front his revenges with
the easy groans of old women, the virginal palms of your 45
daughters, or with the palsied intercession of such a
decayed dotant as you seem to be ? Can you think to blow
out the intended fire your city is ready to flame in with
such weak breath as this ? No, you are deceived ; there- 50
fore, back to Rome, and prepare for your execution : you
are condemned, our general has sworn you out of reprieve
and pardon.

Menenius. Sirrah, if thy captain knew I were here, he
would use me with estimation. 55

Second Guard. Come, my captain knows you not.

Menenius. I mean, thy general.

First Guard. My general cares not for you. Back,
I say : go, lest I let forth your half-pint of blood ; back, 60
that's the utmost of your having : back.

Menenius. Nay, but, fellow, fellow,—

Enter CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS

Coriolanus. What's the matter ?

Menenius. Now, you companion, I'll say an errand
for you: you shall know now that I am in estimation: you 65
shall perceive that a Jack guardant cannot office me from
my son Coriolanus : guess, but by my entertainment with

him, if thou standest not i' the state of hanging, or of some 70
 death more long in spectatorship, and crueller in suffering ;
 behold now presently, and swoond for what's to come
 upon thee. [*To CORIOLANUS.*] The glorious gods sit in
 hourly synod about thy particular prosperity, and love
 thee no worse than thy old father Menenius does ! O my 75
 son ! my son ! thou art preparing fire for us ; look thee,
 here's water to quench it. I was hardly moved to come
 to thee ; but being assured none but myself could move
 thee, I have been blown out of your gates with sighs ; 80
 and conjure thee to pardon Rome, and thy petitionary
 countrymen. The good gods assuage thy wrath, and
 turn the dregs of it upon this varlet here ; this, who, like
 a block, hath denied my access to thee. 85

Coriolanus. Away !

Menenius. How ! away !

Coriolanus. Wife, mother, child, I know not. My affairs
 Are servanted to others : though I owe
 My revenge properly, my remission lies 90
 In Volscian breasts. That we have been familiar,
 Ingrate forgetfulness shall poison, rather
 Than pity note how much. Therefore, be gone :
 Mine ears against your suits are stronger than
 Your gates against my force. Yet, for I lov'd thee, 95
 Take this along ; I writ it for thy sake, [*Gives a paper.*
 And would have sent it. Another word, Menenius,
 I will not hear thee speak. This man, Aufidius,
 Was my belov'd in Rome : yet thou behold'st !

Aufidius. You keep a constant temper. 100

[*Exeunt CORIOLANUS and AUFIDIUS.*]

First Guard. Now, sir, is your name Menenius ?

Second Guard. 'Tis a spell, you see, of much power.
 You know the way home again.

First Guard. Do you hear how we are shent for keeping 105
 your greatness back ?

Second Guard. What cause, do you think, I have to
 swoond ?

Menenius. I neither care for the world, nor your
 g'neral : for such things as you, I can scarce think there's 110
 any, ye're so slight. He that hath a will to die by himself
 fears it not from another. Let your general do his worst.
 For you, be that you are, long ; and your misery increase
 with your age ! I say to you, as I was said to, Away !

[*Exit.*]

First Guard. A noble fellow, I warrant him. 115

Second Guard. The worthy fellow is our general : he is
the rock, the oak not to be wind-shaken. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*The Tent of CORIOLANUS.*

Enter CORIOLANUS, AUFIDIUS, and Others.

Coriolanus. We will before the walls of Rome to-morrow
Set down our host. My partner in this action,
You must report to the Volscian lords, how plainly
I have borne this business.

Aufidius. Only their ends
You have respected ; stopp'd your ears against 5
The general suit of Rome ; never admitted
A private whisper ; no, not with such friends
That thought them sure of you.

Coriolanus. This last old man,
Whom with a crack'd heart I have sent to Rome,
Lov'd me above the measure of a father ; 10
Nay, godded me indeed. Their latest refuge
Was to send him ; for whose old love I have,
Though I show'd sourly to him, once more offer'd
The first conditions, which they did refuse,
And cannot now accept, to grace him only 15
That thought he could do more. A very little
I have yielded to ; fresh embassies and suits,
Nor from the state, nor private friends, hereafter
Will I lend ear to. [*Shout within.*] Ha ! what shout is this ?
Shall I be tempted to infringe my vow 20
In the same time 'tis made ? I will not.

*Enter, in mourning habits, VIRGILIA, VOLUMNIA, leading
young MARCIUS, VALERIA, and Attendants.*

My wife comes foremost ; then the honour'd mould
Wherein this trunk was fram'd, and in her hand
The grandchild to her blood. But out, affection !
All bond and privilege of nature, break ! 25
Let it be virtuous to be obstinate.
What is that curtsy worth ? or those doves' eyes,
Which can make gods forsworn ? I melt, and am not
Of stronger earth than others. My mother bows,
As if Olympus to a molehill should 30
In supplication nod ; and my young boy
Hath an aspect of intercession, which
Great nature cries, ' Deny not.' Let the Volscies

Plough Rome, and harrow Italy: I'll never
 Be such a gosling to obey instinct, but stand 35
 As if a man were author of himself
 And knew no other kin.

Virgilia. My lord and husband!

Coriolanus. These eyes are not the same I wore in
 Rome.

Virgilia. The sorrow that delivers us thus chang'd
 Makes you think so.

Coriolanus. Like a dull actor now, 40
 I have forgot my part, and I am out,
 Even to a full disgrace. Best of my flesh,
 Forgive my tyranny; but do not say
 For that, 'Forgive our Romans.' O! a kiss
 Long as my exile, sweet as my revenge! 45
 Now, by the jealous queen of heaven, that kiss
 I carried from thee, dear, and my true lip
 Hath virgin'd it e'er since. You gods! I prate,
 And the most noble mother of the world
 Leave unsaluted. Sink, my knee, in the earth; [*Kneels.* 50
 Of thy deep duty more impression show
 Than that of common sons.

Volumnia. O! stand up bless'd;
 Whilst, with no softer cushion than the flint,
 I kneel before thee, and unproperly
 Show duty, as mistaken all this while 55
 Between the child and parent. [*Kneels.*

Coriolanus. What is this?
 Your knees to me! to your corrected son!
 Then let the pebbles on the hungry beach
 Fillip the stars; then let the mutinous winds
 Strike the proud cedars 'gainst the fiery sun, 60
 Murd'ring impossibility, to make
 What cannot be, slight work.

Volumnia. Thou art my warrior;
 I help to frame thee. Do you know this lady?

Coriolanus. The noble sister of Publicola,
 The moon of Rome; chaste as the icicle 65
 That's curdied by the frost from purest snow,
 And hangs on Dian's temple: dear Valeria!

Volumnia. This is a poor epitome of yours,
 [*Pointing to the Child.*
 Which by the interpretation of full time
 May show like all yourself.

Coriolanus. The god of soldiers, 70
 With the consent of supreme Jove, inform
 Thy thoughts with nobleness; that thou mayst prove
 To shame invulnerable, and stick i' the wars
 Like a great sea-mark, standing every flaw,
 And saving those that eye thee!

Volumnia. Your knee, sirrah. 75

Coriolanus. That's my brave boy!

Volumnia. Even he, your wife, this lady, and myself,
 Are suitors to you.

Coriolanus. I beseech you, peace :
 Or, if you'd ask, remember this before :
 The things I have forsworn to grant may never 80
 Be held by you denials. Do not bid me
 Dismiss my soldiers, or capitulate
 Again with Rome's mechanics : tell me not
 Wherein I seem unnatural : desire not
 To allay my rages and revenges with 85
 Your colder reasons.

Volumnia. O ! no more, no more ;
 You have said you will not grant us any thing ;
 For we have nothing else to ask but that
 Which you deny already : yet we will ask ;
 That, if you fail in our request, the blame 90
 May hang upon your hardness. Therefore, hear us.

Coriolanus. Aufidius, and you Volscies, mark : for we'll
 Hear nought from Rome in private. Your request !

Volumnia. Should we be silent and not speak, our raiment
 And state of bodies would bewray what life 95
 We have led since thy exile. Think with thyself
 How more unfortunate than all living women
 Are we come hither : since that thy sight, which should
 Make our eyes flow with joy, hearts dance with comforts,
 Constrains them weep, and shake with fear and sorrow : 100
 Making the mother, wife, and child to see
 The son, the husband, and the father tearing
 His country's bowels out. And to poor we
 Thine enmity's most capital : thou barr'st us
 Our prayers to the gods, which is a comfort 105
 That all but we enjoy ; for how can we,
 Alas ! how can we for our country pray,
 Whereto we are bound, together with thy victory,
 Whereto we are bound ! Alack ! or we must lose
 The country, our dear nurse, or else thy person, 110

Our comfort in the country. We must find
 An evident calamity, though we had
 Our wish, which side should win; for either thou
 Must, as a foreign recreant, be led
 With manacles thorough our streets, or else 115
 Triumphantly tread on thy country's ruin,
 And bear the palm for having bravely shed
 Thy wife and children's blood. For myself, son,
 I purpose not to wait on Fortune till
 These wars determine: if I cannot persuade thee 120
 Rather to show a noble grace to both parts
 Than seek the end of one, thou shalt no sooner
 March to assault thy country than to tread—
 'Trust to't, thou shalt not—on thy mother's womb,
 That brought thee to this world.

Virgilia. Ay, and mine, 125
 That brought you forth this boy, to keep your name
 Living to time.

Boy. A' shall not tread on me:
 I'll run away till I am bigger, but then I'll fight.

Coriolanus. Not of a woman's tenderness to be,
 Requires nor child nor woman's face to see. 130
 I have sat too long. [*Rising.*]

Volumnia. Nay, go not from us thus.
 If it were so, that our request did tend
 To save the Romans, thereby to destroy
 The Volscies whom you serve, you might condemn us,
 As poisonous of your honour: no; our suit 135
 Is, that you reconcile them: while the Volscies
 May say, 'This mercy we have show'd;' the Romans,
 'This we receiv'd;' and each in either side
 Give the all-hail to thee, and cry, 'Be bless'd
 For making up this peace!' Thou know'st, great son, 140
 The end of war's uncertain; but this certain,
 That, if thou conquer Rome, the benefit
 Which thou shalt thereby reap is such a name
 Whose repetition will be dogg'd with curses;
 Whose chronicle thus writ: 'The man was noble, 145
 But with his last attempt he wip'd it out,
 Destroy'd his country, and his name remains
 To the ensuing age abhorr'd.' Speak to me, son!
 Thou hast affected the fine strains of honour,
 To imitate the graces of the gods; 150
 To tear with thunder the wide cheeks o' the air,

And yet to charge thy sulphur with a bolt
That should but rive an oak. Why dost not speak ?
Think'st thou it honourable for a noble man
Still to remember wrongs ? Daughter, speak you : 155
He cares not for your weeping. Speak thou, boy :
Perhaps thy childishness will move him more
Than can our reasons. There is no man in the world
More bound to's mother ; yet here he lets me prate
Like one i' the stocks. Thou hast never in thy life 160
Show'd thy dear mother any courtesy ;
When she—poor hen ! fond of no second brood—
Has cluck'd thee to the wars, and safely home,
Loaden with honour. Say my request's unjust,
And spurn me back ; but if it be not so, 165
Thou art not honest, and the gods will plague thee,
That thou restrain'st from me the duty which
To a mother's part belongs. He turns away :
Down, ladies ; let us shame him with our knees.
To his surname Coriolanus 'longs more pride 170
Than pity to our prayers. Down : an end ;
This is the last : so we will home to Rome,
And die among our neighbours. Nay, behold us.
This boy, that cannot tell what he would have,
But kneels and holds up hands for fellowship, 175
Does reason our petition with more strength
Than thou hast to deny 't. Come, let us go :
This fellow had a Volscian to his mother ;
His wife is in Corioli, and his child
Like him by chance. Yet give us our dispatch : 180
I am hush'd until our city be a-fire,
And then I'll speak a little.

Coriolanus. [*Holding VOLUMNIA by the hand, silent.*] O,
mother, mother !
What have you done ? Behold ! the heavens do ope,
The gods look down, and this unnatural scene
They laugh at. O my mother ! mother ! O ! 185
You have won a happy victory to Rome ;
But, for your son, believe it, O ! believe it,
Most dangerously you have with him prevail'd,
If not most mortal to him. But let it come.
Aufidius, though I cannot make true wars, 190
I'll frame convenient peace. Now, good Aufidius,
Were you in my stead, would you have heard
A mother less, or granted less, Aufidius ?

Aufidius. I was mov'd withal.

Coriolanus. I dare be sworn you were :

And, sir, it is no little thing to make 195

Mine eyes to sweat compassion. But, good sir,

What peace you'll make, advise me. for my part,

I'll not to Rome, I'll back with you ; and pray you,

Stand to me in this cause. O mother ! wife !

Aufidius. [*Aside.*] I am glad thou hast set thy mercy and
thy honour 200

At difference in thee : out of that I'll work

Myself a former fortune.

[*The ladies make signs to CORIOLANUS.*

Coriolanus. Ay, by and by ;

But we will drink together ; and you shall bear

A better witness back than words, which we,

On like conditions, would have counter-seal'd. 205

Come, enter with us. Ladies, you deserve

To have a temple built you : all the swords

In Italy, and her confederate arms,

Could not have made this peace.

[*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*Rome. A Public Place.*

Enter MENENIUS and SICINIUS.

Menenius. See you yond coign o' the Capitol, yond
corner-stone ?

Sicinius. Why, what of that ?

Menenius. If it be possible for you to displace it with
your little finger, there is some hope the ladies of Rome,
especially his mother, may prevail with him. But I say,
there is no hope in't. Our throats are sentenced and stay
upon execution. 5

Sicinius. Is't possible that so short a time can alter 10
the condition of a man ?

Menenius. There is differency between a grub and a
butterfly : yet your butterfly was a grub. This Marcius
is grown from man to dragon : he has wings ; he's more 15
than a creeping thing.

Sicinius. He loved his mother dearly.

Menenius. So did he me ; and he no more remembers
his mother now than an eight-year-old horse. The tartness
of his face sours ripe grapes : when he walks, he moves like 20
an engine, and the ground shrinks before his treading he
is able to pierce a corslet with his eye ; talks like a knell,

and his hum is a battery. He sits in his state, as a thing
made for Alexander. What he bids be done is finished 25
with his bidding. He wants nothing of a god but eternity
and a heaven to throne in.

Sicinius. Yes, mercy, if you report him truly.

Menenius. I paint him in the character. Mark what 30
mercy his mother shall bring from him : there is no more
mercy in him than there is milk in a male tiger ; that shall
our poor city find : and all this is 'long of you.

Sicinius. The gods be good unto us !

Menenius. No, in such a case the gods will not be good 35
unto us. When we banished him, we respected not them ;
and, he returning to break our necks, they respect not us.

Enter a Messenger.

Messenger. Sir, if you'd save your life, fly to your house :
The plebeians have got your fellow-tribune, 40
And hale him up and down ; all swearing, if
The Roman ladies bring not comfort home,
They'll give him death by inches.

Enter a second Messenger.

Sicinius. What's the news ?

Second Messenger. Good news, good news ! the ladies have
prevail'd,
The Volscians are dislodg'd, and Marcius gone. 45
A merrier day did never yet greet Rome,
No, not the expulsion of the Tarquins.

Sicinius. Friend,
Art thou certain this is true ? is it most certain ?

Second Messenger. As certain as I know the sun is fire :
Where have you lurk'd that you make doubt of it ? 50
Ne'er through an arch so hurried the blown tide,
As the recomforted through the gates. Why, hark you !

[*Trumpets and hautboys sounded, and drums beaten, all
together. Shouting also within.*]

The trumpets, sackbuts, psalteries, and fifes,
Tabors, and cymbals, and the shouting Romans,
Make the sun dance. Hark you ! [A shout within.]

Menenius. This is good news : 55
I will go meet the ladies. This Volumnia
Is worth of consuls, senators, patricians,
A city full ; of tribunes, such as you,

A sea and land full. You have pray'd well to-day :
 This morning for ten thousand of your throats 60
 I'd not have given a doit. Hark, how they joy !

[*Music still and shouts.*]

Sicinius. First, the gods bless you for your tidings ; next,
 Accept my thankfulness

Second Messenger. Sir, we have all
 Great cause to give great thanks.

Sicinius. They are near the city ?

Second Messenger. Almost at point to enter.

Sicinius. We will meet them, 65
 And help the joy. [*Going.*]

*Enter the Ladies, accompanied by Senators, Patricians, and
 People. They pass over the stage.*

First Senator. Behold our patroness, the life of Rome !
 Call all your tribes together, praise the gods,
 And make triumphant fires ; strew flowers before them :
 Unshout the noise that banish'd Marcius : 70
 Repeat him with the welcome of his mother ;
 Cry, ' Welcome, ladies, welcome ! '

All. Welcome, ladies,
 Welcome ! [*A flourish with drums and trumpets. Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—*Corioli. A Public Place.*

Enter TULLUS AUFIDIUS, with Attendants.

Aufidius. Go tell the lords o' the city I am here :
 Deliver them this paper : having read it,
 Bid them repair to the market-place ; where I,
 Even in theirs and in the commons' ears,
 Will vouch the truth of it. Him I accuse 5
 The city ports by this hath enter'd, and
 Intends to appear before the people, hoping
 To purge himself with words : dispatch.

[*Exeunt Attendants.*]

Enter three or four Conspirators of AUFIDIUS' faction.
 Most welcome !

First Conspirator. How is it with our general ?

Aufidius. Even so 10
 As with a man by his own alms empoison'd,
 And with his charity slain.

Second Conspirator. Most noble sir,
If you do hold the same intent wherein
You wish'd us parties, we'll deliver you
Of your great danger.

Aufidius. Sir, I cannot tell : 15
We must proceed as we do find the people.

Third Conspirator. The people will remain uncertain whilst
'Twixt you there's difference : but the fall of either
Makes the survivor heir of all.

Aufidius. I know it ;
And my pretext to strike at him admits 20
A good construction. I rais'd him, and I pawn'd
Mine honour for his truth : who being so heighten'd,
He water'd his new plants with dews of flattery,
Seducing so my friends ; and, to this end,
He bow'd his nature, never known before 25
But to be rough, unswayable, and free.

Third Conspirator. Sir, his stoutness
When he did stand for consul, which he lost
By lack of stooping,—

Aufidius. That I would have spoke of :
Being banish'd for 't, he came unto my hearth ; 30
Presented to my knife his throat : I took him ;
Made him joint-servant with me ; gave him way
In all his own desires ; nay, let him choose
Out of my files, his projects to accomplish,
My best and freshest men ; serv'd his designments 35
In mine own person ; help to reap the fame
Which he did end all his ; and took some pride
To do myself this wrong : till, at the last,
I seem'd his follower, not partner ; and
He waged me with his countenance, as if 40
I had been mercenary.

First Conspirator. So he did, my lord :
The army marvell'd at it ; and, in the last,
When we had carried Rome, and that we look'd
For no less spoil than glory,—

Aufidius. There was it ;
For which my sinews shall be stretch'd upon him. 45
At a few drops of women's rheum, which are
As cheap as lies, he sold the blood and labour
Of our great action : therefore shall he die,
And I'll renew me in his fall. But, hark !

[Drums and trumpets sound, with great shouts of the People.]

First Conspirator. Your native town you enter'd like
a post, 50

And had no welcomes home; but he returns,
Splitting the air with noise.

Second Conspirator. And patient fools,
Whose children he hath slain, their base throats tear
With giving him glory.

Third Conspirator. Therefore, at your vantage,
Ere he express himself, or move the people 55
With what he would say, let him feel your sword,
Which we will second. When he lies along,
After your way his tale pronounc'd shall bury
His reasons with his body.

Aufidius. Say no more :
Here come the lords. 60

Enter the Lords of the city.

Lords. You are most welcome home.

Aufidius. I have not deserv'd it.
But, worthy lords, have you with heed perus'd
What I have written to you ?

Lords. We have.

First Lord. And grieve to hear't.
What faults he made before the last, I think
Might have found easy fines : but there to end 65
Where he was to begin, and give away
The benefit of our levies, answering us
With our own charge, making a treaty where
There was a yielding, this admits no excuse.

Aufidius. He approaches : you shall hear him. 70

*Enter CORIOLANUS, with drums and colours ; a crowd of Citizens
with him.*

Coriolanus. Hail, lords ! I am return'd your soldier :
No more infected with my country's love
Than when I parted hence, but still subsisting
Under your great command. You are to know,
That prosperously I have attempted and 75
With bloody passage led your wars even to
The gates of Rome. Our spoils we have brought home
Do more than counterpoise a full third part
The charges of the action. We have made peace
With no less honour to the Antiates 80

Than shame to the Romans ; and we here deliver,
 Subscrib'd by the consuls and patricians,
 Together with the seal o' the senate, what
 We have compounded on.

Aufidius. Read it not, noble lords ;
 But tell the traitor in the highest degree 85
 He hath abus'd your powers.

Coriolanus. Traitor ! How now ?

Aufidius. Ay, traitor, Marcius.

Coriolanus. Marcius !

Aufidius. Ay, Marcius, Caius Marcius. Dost thou think
 I'll grace thee with that robbery, thy stol'n name
 Coriolanus in Corioli ? 90

You lords and heads of the state, perfidiously
 He has betray'd your business, and given up,
 For certain drops of salt, your city Rome,
 I say ' your city,' to his wife and mother ;
 Breaking his oath and resolution like 95
 A twist of rotten silk, never admitting
 Counsel o' the war, but at his nurse's tears
 He whin'd and roar'd away your victory,
 That pages blush'd at him, and men of heart
 Look'd wondering each at other.

Coriolanus. Hear'st thou, Mars ? 100

Aufidius. Name not the god, thou boy of tears.

Coriolanus. Ha !

Aufidius. No more.

Coriolanus. Measureless liar, thou hast made my heart
 Too great for what contains it. ' Boy ! ' O slave !
 Pardon me, lords, 'tis the first time that ever 105
 I was forc'd to scold. Your judgments, my grave lords,
 Must give this cur the lie : and his own notion—
 Who wears my stripes impress'd upon him, that
 Must bear my beating to his grave—shall join
 To thrust the lie unto him. 110

First Lord. Peace, both, and hear me speak.

Coriolanus. Cut me to pieces, Volscies : men and lads,
 Stain all your edges on me. ' Boy ! ' False hound !
 If you have writ your annals true, 'tis there,
 That, like an eagle in a dove-cote, I 115
 Flutter'd your Volscians in Corioli :
 Alone I did it. ' Boy ! '

Aufidius. Why, noble lords,
 Will you be put in mind of his blind fortune,

Which was your shame, by this unholy braggart,
Fore your own eyes and ears !

Conspirators. Let him die for't. 120

All the People. Tear him to pieces.—Do it presently.—
He killed my son.—My daughter.—He killed my cousin
Marcus.—He killed my father.

Second Lord. Peace, ho ! no outrage : peace ! 125
The man is noble and his fame folds in
This orb o' the earth. His last offences to us
Shall have judicious hearing. Stand, Aufidius,
And trouble not the peace.

Coriolanus. O ! that I had him,
With six Aufidiuses, or more, his tribe, 130
To use my lawful sword !

Aufidius. Insolent villain !

Conspirators. Kill, kill, kill, kill, kill him !

[AUFIDIUS and the Conspirators draw, and kill
CORIOLANUS, who falls : AUFIDIUS stands on his
body.]

Lords. Hold, hold, hold, hold !

Aufidius. My noble masters, hear me speak.

First Lord. O Tullus !

Second Lord. Thou hast done a deed whereat valour will
weep.

Third Lord. Tread not upon him. Masters all, be
quiet. 135

Put up your swords.

Aufidius. My lords, when you shall know,—as in this
rage,

Provok'd by him, you cannot,—the great danger
Which this man's life did owe you, you'll rejoice
That he is thus cut off. Please it your honours 140
To call me to your senate, I'll deliver
Myself your loyal servant, or endure
Your heaviest censure.

First Lord. Bear from hence his body ;
And mourn you for him ! Let him be regarded
As the most noble corpse that ever herald 145
Did follow to his urn.

Second Lord. His own impatience
Takes from Aufidius a great part of blame.
Let's make the best of it.

Aufidius. My rage is gone,
And I am struck with sorrow. Take him up :

Help, three o' the chiefest soldiers ; I'll be one. 150
Beat thou the drum, that it speak mournfully ;
Trail your steel pikes. Though in this city he
Hath widow'd and unchilded many a one,
Which to this hour bewail the injury,
Yet he shall have a noble memory. 155
Assist.

*[Exeunt, bearing the body of CORIOLANUS. A dead
march sounded.]*



NOTES

* An asterisk indicates an illustration from North's *Plutarch*, either by quotation or by reference to the Selections printed on pp. 141-60. *N.E.D.* = *New English Dictionary*.

ACT I, SCENE I. 16. *good* has here its commercial sense of being 'good' for so much, substantial, wealthy.

21. *the object of our misery*, our misery as an object before their eyes, the spectacle of our misery.

21-2. *as an inventory to particularise their abundance*. They see, from the little we have, precisely how much more they have.

23. *pikes . . . rakes*. First Citizen plays with the proverb 'as lean as a rake'. A 'pike', besides meaning a lance, meant also a pitchfork. It has this meaning still in Shropshire.

29. *a very dog*. He means pitiless, heartless. Cp. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, II. iii. 10-12: 'He is a stone, a very pebble stone, and has no more pity in him than a dog.' It is singular how few good words Shakespeare has for the dog.

38. *to that end*: namely, the gratification of his pride.

*39. *he did it to please his mother*. So Plutarch. See p. 142.

40. *to be partly proud*, partly to be proud. Such transpositions are not uncommon. Cp. I. 241 below, and *Julius Caesar*, v. iv. 12: 'Only I yield to die' (I yield only to die), &c.

41. *to the altitude of his virtue*. His pride is as high as his merit. 'Virtue,' which when used of persons means nowadays a particular kind of moral excellence, here means excellence or merit simply. We still talk in this sense of the 'virtue' of a medicine or of a scheme.

*52. S.D. Enter MENENIUS AGRIPPA. For Plutarch's version of this mission of Menenius, see pp. 143-4.

58. *bats*, cudgels.

62. *strong breaths*. He jokes again a little bitterly. We are reminded of Casca in *Julius Caesar* (I. ii. 245-9): 'the rabblement shouted . . . and threw up their sweaty night-caps, and uttered such a deal of stinking breath . . . that it had almost choked Caesar.' Cp. IV. vi. 99, 131-2.

76. *in your impediment*, in any impediment you can make. 'Your' is emphatic.

78. *Your knees to them* is one expression, and means prayer.

81. *The helms o' the state*. The state is thought of as a ship, the calamity of the dearth as a storm, the patricians as the men at the helm, the commons as inexperienced and panic-stricken passengers whose interference can do nothing but harm.

*83-91. For these grievances of the commons see pp. 142-3, 147-8. The 'dearth' or famine is described on pp. 147-8; the 'usury' troubles on p. 142. The first was later than the other, but Shakespeare has combined them.

97. *stale't a little more*, make it a little staler still by telling it again. The original reading is 'scale't'. Out of 'scale't' (as out of anything)

ingenuity may wrest a meaning: but probability declares it a misprint.

99. *job off* is to put off or set aside anything by a trick. You mustn't think, says First Citizen, to put off the burning question of our disgraceful treatment with a wily tale.

an't, if it. 'An't' is 'an't'; it is short for 'and it'. 'And,' meaning 'if', was very common, and in Shakespeare's time was always printed 'and' (not 'an'), except in this one phrase, 'an't'.

100. *deliver*, deliver your tale.

*101 f. *There was a time*. &c. See Plutarch's version, p. 144, and Camden's, *Introd.* III.

103. *a gulf*, a mere 'yawning gulf' (as we say); a sink (l. 28).

106. *where*, whereas.

109. *affection* has its original sense of feeling or desire generally.

114. *Which ne'er came from the lungs*. This means that it was a smile all his own, and that there was no cackle, no merriment in it. It was a slow, silent, disdainful smile, owing nothing to any member but the belly himself.

even thus. Menenius smiles in the manner described.

118. *envied his receipt*, envied him what he received.

119. *for that*, for this that, because.

124. *muniments*, defences, supports.

126. '*Fore me* is a mild version of '*Fore God*'. So, commonly, '*Afore me*' and '*Before me*'.

132. *you'st*: a provincialism for 'you'll' (from 'you' and 'shalt'). Menenius drops into it intentionally. His game is to be homely.

134. *Your* implies 'this belly, don't you know, that you and I are talking of'. It was a very common colloquial turn. (Cp. v. iv. 13.)

135. *incorporate*, who make up one body with me.

142. *to the court, the heart, to the seat o' the brain*. Reason is king in men. His royal seat is the brain, his court is the heart, where his courtiers and counsellors are. Cp. ll. 121-2: 'The kingly crowned head. . . The counsellor heart.'

143. *cranks*, winding passages.

offices: the old name for the parts of an establishment occupied by the domestics.

144. *nerves*, sinews: the original sense (Lat. *nervus*, sinew, tendon).

157. *the weal o' the common*, the welfare of the common people, the common weal. For 'the common' cp. III. i. 28.

165. *Thou rascal*. This is the language of sport. A 'rascal' was a deer out of season and condition.

worst in blood to run, in the worst condition for running. A deer in good condition was said to be 'in blood'. The mangy fellow was the last man you would select for anything active.

166. *some vantage*, some personal advantage.

168. *Rome and her rats*. Rome means Menenius and the senatorials; the rats are the populace.

169. *The one side must have bale*, one side or the other must suffer mischief. Shakespeare uses 'baleful' seven times, but 'bale' only here. It was even then an antiquated word.

171-2. There is a singular compression in Marcius' abuse. In two

lines he declares that their grievances are only skin-deep, that they are self-caused, and that they themselves are filthy fellows, 'scabs.'

181. *subdues him*, brings him under punishment.

182. *curse that justice did it*, curse that justice which did it, which punished him.

183. *affections*. Cp. l. 109 n.

190. *your garland*, your glory, your crown of glory. Cp. i. ix. 60, ii. ii. 106.

193. *which* could then be used in all three genders.

199. *side factions*, take sides in factions.

202. *Below their cobbled shoes*. In these fireside gossips they would pull down the parties they didn't like, and trample them, as it were, under their feet.

203. *ruth*, pity.

204. *make a quarry*. The 'quarry', in hunting language, was the game, dead or alive. I'd make a heap of dead game of them, he says.

206. *pick*, pitch. Having first quartered them with his sword, he would then pitchfork them into a heap with his lance. 'Pick' and 'pitch' are forms of the same word, like 'potch' and 'poke' in i. x. 15.

208-9. *discretion . . . cowardly*. Though they lack discretion, which is the better part of valour, they are not, as this might lead you to suppose, at all courageous. They are, on the contrary, arrant cowards.

210. *the other troop*: the mob on 'the other side o' the city' (ll. 48-9 above).

211. *an-hungry*. Marcius mocks their homely speech as he mocks at their homely proverbs. This 'a-' or 'an-' was a provincialism in England.

217. *generosity* has its original sense, 'nobility of birth' (Lat. *generosus*, well-born). He means: enough to break the hearts of all true-born gentlemen.

219. *As*, as if.

*220. *What is granted them?* For what follows, see p. 144.

*221. *Five tribunes*. Here Shakespeare follows Plutarch, who talks of the granting of five Tribunes and the appointment of two, Brutus and Sicinius. The office of *Tribuni Plebis*, or Tribunes of the Commons, was 'the name given among the Romans to the official representatives granted to the plebeians in 494 B. C., as a protection against the oppression of patricians and consuls. At first they were two in number, then five, and (after 457 B. C.) ten. . . . They possessed the privilege . . . of being "sacrosanct" and inviolable'.

Their earliest right, which was at first exercised in favour of the *plebs*, but soon on behalf of all citizens, was that of protection, which they could use against all magistrates with the exception of the dictator. This enabled them to prevent the execution of official orders by a simple veto. In face of any opposition they were authorized to have recourse to compulsory measures such as arrest, fines, or imprisonment. . . . Their house stood open day and night to any who sought their assistance. . . . Without appeal they could interpose in any measure which affected the whole *plebs*, such as the levying of troops and the raising

of the war-tax' (*Dict. of Classical Antiq.*, Seyffert-Nettleship). See further, II. ii. 41 n.

223. 'Sdeath! Short for 'God's death!'

226. *Win upon power*, gain upon constituted authority.

230. *the Volscs are in arms*. They rose on the first news of the troubles in Rome, hoping to take her unprepared. According to Plutarch, the commons refused to muster against the Volscs until their grievances were met. This, he says, was what drove the Senate to grant them Tribunes.

*231-2. *vent Our musty superfluity*. In this war, he means, we shall have a chance of getting rid of some of this superfluous rabble. The phrase was suggested by North's Plutarch, at another place in the narrative: 'by this means as well to take away this new sedition, and utterly rid it out of the city, as also to clear the same of many mutinous and seditious persons, being the *superfluous* ill-humours that grievously feed this disease.'

233. He must have predicted that the Volscs would rise. That they had actually risen he learned only a moment ago.

241. *Only my wars with him*, my wars with him only. Cp. I. 40 n.

247. *art thou stiff? stand'st stout?* Evidently Titus comes on lame, or stiff with age. He declares that he won't stand out for all that.

253. *Right worthy you priority*, you being right worthy of precedence.

255. *rats*. Cp. I. 168.

256. *mutiners*, mutineers. Cp. 'pioner' = pioneer, 'engineer' = engineer (*Hamlet*, I. v. 163, III. iv. 206).

257. *puts well forth*, sprouts well, buds well. He means: you've been brave promising fellows in the mutiny, now let's see you follow it up in the war.

262. *gird*, gird at, taunt.

264. *The present wars devour him*, these wars eat him up with pride.

265. *Too proud to be*, too proud of being.

269. *the which*. The article with 'which' was then common.

270. *whom*. In l. 269 he thinks of Fame as an object aimed at: 'which,' therefore. In l. 270 he thinks of Fame as a person, whose good graces Coriolanus has won: 'whom,' therefore.

274. *giddy censure*, vain idle opinion. 'Censure' here and in most places in Shakespeare means simply judgement or opinion (Lat. *censēre*, judge, estimate).

275. *of*, concerning.

278. *demerits*, merits (Lat. *dēmeritum*, from *dēmererī*, to merit). The *de-* was later taken in a privative or negative sense, so that 'demerit' came to mean, not merit, but a lack of it.

284. *More than his singularity*, over and above his natural singularity (which, Sicinius implies, may be taken for granted in anything he may do).

ACT I, SCENE II. 2. *in*, into.

4. *What ever have*. If this is right, 'what' must mean 'what things'.

6. *circumvention*, i.e. the means of circumventing, by being forewarned.

9. *press'd a power*, pressed a force into service. 'Power' was the regular word for an armed force.

15. *preparation* means a force prepared for action. Cp. *Othello*, I. iii. 221: 'The Turk with a most mighty preparation makes for Cyprus.'

20. *pretences*, pretentions, designs. So 'pretend' has commonly the meaning of 'intend', like Fr. *prétendre*.

24. *take in*, capture: the regular word. Readers of Scott may remember Captain Dugald Dalgetty's talk of the 'intaking' of towns. Another of his favourite words will be found in the next Act (II. i. 270): 'provand.'

27. *Corioli* is to be pronounced in this play Cōriōli (not Cōriōli, which is the correct pronunciation). *Coriolanus*, on the other hand, has its proper pronunciation, Cōriōlānus.

28. *set down before's*, lay regular siege to us.

remove, raising of the siege: the regular word.

32. *parcels*, portions.

ACT I, SCENE III. 10. *should*. We should say 'would'.

11. *such a person*, one with such a person as he had.

16. *his brows bound with oak*. He was crowned with a garland of oak-leaves, according to Roman custom, for having saved the life of a fellow Roman in battle. See Cominius's description of this achievement, II. ii. 92 f.

25. *thine and my good Marcius*. We should say, 'my good Marcius and thine,' or 'thy good Marcius and mine'. Cp. v. v. 4 n.

31. *Beseech you*. In such places the 'I' was commonly dropped.

retire myself, retire. 'Retire' is one of a large number of intransitive verbs which were once reflexive.

37. *got*, begotten.

41. *Or . . . or*, either . . . or. He must either mow all or lose his wage.

44. *his trophy*, the monument on his tomb. This is the usual meaning of 'trophy' in Shakespeare.

Hecuba was the wife of Priam, king of Troy. Hector was her eldest son, and the champion of the Trojans in their war with the Greeks, as related by Homer in his *Iliad*.

47. *contemning*. An emendation of Collier's. The original edition reads, 'At Grecian sword. *Contenning*, tell *Valeria*', &c. Evidently 'contenning' was taken by the printers to be a proper name, the name of the Gentlewoman, for their rule was to print all proper names in italics. Perhaps it is a name, corrupted. If it is not, then Collier's 'contemning' is excellent and may be right.

49. *bless . . . from*: as it were, 'bless and save from.' The phrase was common: e. g. 'Bless thee from the foul fiend!' (*Leir*, IV. i. 58).

56. *spot*, pattern. Cp. *Othello*, III. iii. 435-6: 'a handkerchief spotted with strawberries' (embroidered).

64. *confirmed*, firm, determined.

71. *mammocked it*, made mammoicks of it, tore it into shreds. 'Mammock,' meaning a scrap, a shred, is a dialect word of obscure origin.

72. *on's*, of 's, of his.

73. *la*: the same expression as the familiar 'la, now!' of servant-maids in Dickens and *Punch*.

74. *a crack*, a little rogue, an urchin. Cp. 2 *Henry IV*, III. ii. 34: 'when he was a crack, not thus high.' In modern Icelandic, according to the *New English Dictionary*, 'krakki' means an urchin.

82. *by your patience*. As we might say, 'by your leave,' or 'you must excuse me'.

91. *another Penelope*. The story of Penelope's web is well known. In the long enforced absence of her husband Ulysses after the Trojan war, she was persecuted by a crowd of suitors. After enduring them for a time she told them at last that she would consent to choose one of them to be lord of herself and of the island of Ithaca as soon as she should have finished weaving a certain shroud. This kept them dangling nearly four years, until it was discovered that she had been all the time unravelling by night the work of the day, and that the shroud was no further advanced than before. The rest of the story, how Ulysses arrived in the nick of time and freed her from her persecutors, may be read in the *Odyssey*, or in a classical dictionary.

96. *sensible*, sensitive.

110. *set down*. Cp. I. ii. 28.

112. *Wars* means fighting generally. Cp. v. iii. 190.

117-18. *she will but disease our better mirth*, she will but disease our mirth which will be better without her; that is, she will only make us uncomfortable, and we shall be merrier alone. 'Disease' is 'dis-ease', to make uneasy. 'Better,' it will be seen, implies a whole clause.

This compression and pregnancy of epithet is natural to Shakespeare's style. Cp. *Richard II*, v. ii. 38: 'To whose high will we bow our calm contents' (i. e. to whose high will we bow, and are calm and contented); and *Macbeth*, III. iv. 76: 'Ere human statute purg'd the gentle weal' (i. e. purged the commonweal and made it gentle).

121. *at a word*, in one word, to speak once for all.

122. *I wish you much mirth*. Virgilia is no simpleton. This is a quiet retort on Volumnia's 'better mirth' (l. 117).

ACT I, SCENE IV. *For Plutarch's account of the fighting in Scenes iv-vii, see p. 144 f.

7. *Summon the town*, i. e. to surrender.

9. *'larum* ('alarum') means a call to arms, a battle-cry (orig. from Ital. *all' arme*, 'to arms!').

12. *our fielded friends*, our friends in the field.

14. *No, nor a man that fears you less than he*. He means, 'No, nor a man that fears you more than he.' The confusion is natural. He was thinking 'Aufidius fears you little,' and 'little' suggested 'less' (cp. next line).

17. *pound us up*, shut us up as in a pound.

21. *cloven*, cleft in pieces by Aufidius.

25. *proof*, proof against blows, impenetrable.

30. *All the contagion of the south*. Cp. II. iii. 31-4. The south in Shakespeare is the quarter of fogs, rottenness, and disease. He never mentions the south wind except to curse it or to curse with it. 'The south-fog rot him!' says Cloten in *Cymbeline*. We have a proverb about it: 'When the wind's in the south it's in the rain's mouth.'

36. *Pluto*, according to the ancients, was king of hell.

38. *agu'd fear*. They shake, like men in an ague.

43. *ope*, open. This form was only used predicatively. You could say 'ope the gates' or 'the gates are ope', but not 'the ope gates'.

*44-5. *'Tis for the followers*, &c. 'He did encourage his fellows with words and deeds, crying out to them, that *fortune had opened the gates of the city, more for the followers than the fliers*' (North's *Plutarch*: see further, p. 145).

47. *To the pot*, I warrant him, he's gone to the pot, he's done for. I warrant him. To 'go to the pot' or to 'go to pot' (which we all know) was literally to be cut in pieces like meat for the pot, and so to be destroyed.

49. *Following the fliers*. Observe how Marcius's words stick in the fellow's mind (l. 44-5). It was difficult to forget what Marcius had just said.

53-4. *Who, sensibly, outdares his senseless sword*, &c. Who, though a thing of sense and feeling, will go through more than his sword, which has neither. It may bend, but he never.

*56-60. *Thou wast a soldier*, &c. Shakespeare makes fine use here of a good sentence from North's *Plutarch*. See p. 145. The anachronism, of course, is glaring. It is one thing for Plutarch, writing some centuries after both, to compare Coriolanus with Cato's ideal. It is quite another thing for Coriolanus's contemporary, Cominius, to make the comparison 250 years or so before Cato was born. Cp. the next note, and the similar confusion in III. i. 249-53.

57. *Even to Cato's wish*, even according to Cato's wish, after Cato's own heart. Cato is Marcus Porcius Cato (234-149 B.C.), the great champion of Roman national feeling in the second century before our era, and to later ages the severest pattern of the old Roman virtues. He is generally called the elder Cato to distinguish him from his great-grandson, Cato of Utica, who was father of Portia, the wife of Brutus.

62. *make remain alike*, remain there like him, i.e. fall with him. With 'make remain' = remain, cp. 'make compare' = compare, &c.

ACT I, SCENE V. 3. *A murrain on't!* A plague on't! The murrain is a cattle plague.

3. s.d. *with a trumpet*, with a trumpeter. Cp. 3 *Henry VI*, v. i. 16: 'Go, trumpet, to the walls and sound a parle.' So 'standard' = standard-bearer (*Tempest*, III. ii. 18), 'ensign,' &c.

4. *See here these movers*, &c. 'See here,' he cries ironically, 'see here these bustling stirring fellows whose time is money, who value their hours at a broken *franc piece*.'

5. *drachme*. The 'drachme' (*δραχμή*) or drachma was the principal silver coin of ancient Greece. It was worth just under 10*d*. Sound the final -e.

6. *of a doit*, of a doit's worth. A doit was worth half a farthing.

doublets. The dress of the ancients had no difficulties for Shakespeare. He clothed them all like sixteenth-century Englishmen. Doublets were worn with sleeves and without. With sleeves they were like our jackets; without sleeves, like our waistcoats.

hangmen. Another English term. Executioners in England received the clothes of the executed as a perquisite.

12. *make good*, hold.

18. *physical*, medicinal. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 261: 'Is Brutus sick and is it physical To walk unbraced and suck up the humours Of the dank morning?'

23-4. *Thy friend no less*, &c. May she be no less a friend to thee than to those she places highest!

26. *Go, sound thy trumpet*. He turns to the 'trumpet' mentioned in the Stage Direction after l. 3.

ACT I, SCENE VI. 4. *Whiles* and 'while' were used indifferently.

5. *By interims and conveying gusts*, at intervals, as gusts of wind carried the sound this way.

16. *'Tis not a mile*. According to earlier information it was about a mile and a half (I. iv. 8).

briefly, a short while ago.

17. *confound*, consume (lit. destroy).

25. *a tabor* was a little merry sidedrum, played with the pipe. As the drum was to the fife so was the tabor to the pipe.

27. *man*. Our more grammatical generation would say 'man's'.

29. *clip*, embrace.

32. *to bedward*, toward bed. Cp. 1 *Henry VI*, III. iii. 30: 'Their powers are marching unto Paris-wards.'

42-3. *but for our gentlemen*, &c., had it not been for our gentlemen, the common rank and file——. He breaks off, as his way is, in order to abuse.

44. *budge*. Cp. I. viii. 5.

their battle. A 'battle' is a force or division in battle order. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, v. i. 16: 'Octavius, lead your battle softly on.'

53. *vaward*, vanguard.

60. *not delay*: more emphatic than 'delay not'.

61. *advanc'd*, raised, uplifted. Cp. II. i. 180; and *Tempest*, I. ii. 405: 'The fringed curtains of thine eye advance' (i.e. raise your eyelids). We still talk of 'advancing' a standard in battle.

62. *prove*, put to the proof, to see what it will yield.

69-70. *fear Lesser his person*, fear less for his person.

76. *O! me alone? Make you a sword of me?* The meaning is: What! are you for me alone? is it me alone that you will follow? And do you drop your swords to make me your sword instead, that you lift me thus in the air?

83. *as cause will be obey'd*, as necessary occasion shall arise.

84. *four*. If 'four' is right it must mean four officers. But why should it be the business of precisely four officers to select the volunteers? No one can tell.

ACT I, SCENE VII. 1. *ports*, gates (Lat. *porta*). So v. v. 6.

3. *centuries*. A 'century' (Lat. *centuria*) was a body of a hundred men. It was commanded by a 'centurion'.

ACT I, SCENE VIII. *S.D. *Enter* . . . Marcius and Aufidius. Aufidius is not even mentioned by Plutarch before Coriolanus's banishment. For his first appearance in the narrative, see p. 154.

4. *thy fame and envy* is equivalent to 'thy envied fame', 'thy

odious fame.' This is an elementary manner of expression common in all languages, and particularly attractive to Shakespeare. Cp. III. i. 94: 'The horn and noise o' the monster's'; still better, IV. vii. 44: 'Even with the same austerity and garb.'

The explanation is this. The two ideas in the speaker's mind are fame and envy. Instead of combining them in their relation to each other (e.g. 'envied fame', where the two units, fame and envy, are fused into one expression), he brings them out precisely as they make their first appearance in his mind, as units, to be combined by the understanding of the reader.

Grammarians called this the figure of hendiadys, which is a Greekish expression for 'one thing by means of two'. But we shall do well to leave such terms alone. They only state the difficulty.

5. *budger*. Cp. I. vi. 44.

9. *Corioli walls*. Cp. 'Corioli gates' (II. i. 182), 'Rome gates' (III. iii. 102).

10. *my* is emphatic.

12. *Wrench up thy power to the highest*, screw yourself up to your highest pitch. The metaphor is from screwing up a string instrument.

13. *Wert thou the Hector That was the whip of your bragg'd progeny*, wert thou as great a champion as the hero Hector, who was the whip with which your boasted ancestors the Trojans lashed the Greeks. Hector was the champion of the Trojans in the Trojan war ('tho' Hector), and the Romans claimed to be descended from the Trojans through Hector's brother Aeneas.

For 'whip' cp. IV. vi. 135. 'Progeny,' which properly means descendants, here means 'race' generally. Cp. I *Henry VI*, v. iv. 38: 'Not one begotten of a shepherd swain, But issued of a progeny of kings.'

16. *in your condemned seconds*, in your damned seconding of me. He curses the Volsees for interfering. To be beaten by Marcius, backers and all, made his defeat more shameful. The use of 'in' is odd. Cp. I. x. 14 n.

ACT I, SCENE IX. *For Plutarch's account of this scene, see pp. 146-7.

2. *thou't* is colloquial for 'thou wilt'. So 'woo't' = wilt thou.

6. *gladly quak'd*, thrown into grateful trepidation.

7. *plebeians*. Accent 'plébeians'.

11. *Having fully din'd before*, i. e. at Corioli. This is pointed by the entrance of Titus Lartius, and his exclamation, 'O general . . . Hadst thou beheld.'

*12. *Here is the steel, we the caparison*, Marcius is the real thing; we are only his trappings. The figure was suggested to Shakespeare by some words in North's *Plutarch*, quoted below in the note on l. 62.

14. *has a charter to extol her blood*, is privileged to extol her own child.

18. *effected his good will*, done his honest best.

19. *Hath overtaken mine act*, has got level with what I have done.

20. *The grave of your deserving*. He means: we will not let you dig the grave of your own deserts, we will not let your deserts be buried in you.

24. *to the spire and top of praises vouch'd*, declared in terms which set it on the very pinnacle of praise. The phrase in North's *Plutarch* at this point is, 'commended beyond the moon.'

29. *Should they not*: i. e. should they not have themselves remembered.

31. *tent themselves with death*. A 'tent' was a probe for searching a wound, and to 'tent' a wound was to search or probe it. Should they not be remembered, says Cominius, well might they fester in resentment at ingratitude, and reject all surgery but death.

*31-6. This comes almost word for word from North. See p. 147.

32. *good, and good store*, good ones, and plenty of them.

44. *soothing*, flattery.

46. *Let him be made a coverture for the wars*. This is the most difficult line in a difficult passage, which has defied all the ambulance-work of commentators. 'Him' probably refers to 'steel', by a freedom common in Elizabethan writers. 'Coverture,' which is a modern correction of the original 'overture', means covering or dress. So that Coriolanus may be supposed to be ironical. 'When steel grows as soft as the parasite's silk, then let it be made a covering for the wars (and a fine covering it will make!).'

48. *debile*, weak, debilitated (Lat. *debilis*).

55. *give you*, represent you.

By your patience. Cp. I. iii. 82.

57. *Like one that means his proper harm*, like one that means harm to his proper self, that means to do himself a personal injury.

60. *this war's garland*, this war's crown of glory. Cp. I. i. 190; II. ii. 106.

*62. *With all his trim belonging*, with all the trim that goes along with him. The phrase in North's *Plutarch* is, 'a goodly horse with a caparison, and all furniture to him.'

*66. *addition*, title: the word in North's *Plutarch* (p. 147).

72. *undercrest*, bear or support as a crest. This verb is formed on the model of 'underbear', 'undertake,' &c., where 'under' indicates the position of the agent and expresses the idea of bearing up or supporting. It occurs nowhere else in Shakespeare.

73. *To the fairness of my power*, as well as I fairly can.

77. *The best*, the leading men of Corioli.

articulate, draw up articles or terms of peace.

*79-87. For the original of this welcome incident (welcome as a relief from Coriolanus's 'stoutness'), see North's *Plutarch*, p. 147. In North the man is 'an honest wealthy man . . . now a poor prisoner'. Shakespeare doubles the dramatic value of the incident by making him outright 'a poor man'.

82. *I sometime lay*, I once stayed. So IV. iv. 8. It is impossible not to quote here Sir Henry Wotton's definition of an ambassador: 'an honest man sent to lie abroad for the good of his country.'

ACT I, SCENE X. 2. *on good condition*, on good conditions, on good terms.

4-5. I would I were a Roman, he cries. Then might I be my real self ('that I am'). To be a Volscian is too heavy a handicap.

6. *good condition*, good quality, good point of character. He deliberately twists the word from the meaning intended by First Soldier (l. 2). For this sense of 'condition' cp. II. iii. 102; v. iv. 11. We hardly use it except in the adjective 'ill-conditioned'.

7. *the part that is at mercy*, the side that is at the mercy of the other, the defeated side.

13. *where*, whereas.

14. *in an equal force*, by an equal force. This is an odd use of 'in', with which the reader may compare I. viii. 16; III. i. 209.

15. *potch*, poke. 'Potch' and 'poke' are forms of the same word, like 'pick' and 'pitch' in I. i. 206.

16. *Or . . . or*, either . . . or.

18. *With only suffering stain by him*, only with suffering stain by him. By 'stain' is meant the taint of inferiority.

18–19. *for him Shall fly out of itself*. To be even with him, he says in effect, my valour shall go all lengths, abandoning every native instinct of generosity.

20. *Being naked, sick*, i. e. his being naked or sick. The construction is varied to avoid a monotony of 'nor'. Otherwise we might have had 'Sickness nor nakedness'. 'Naked' means defenceless, unarmed; or, perhaps, destitute.

fane, temple.

Capitol. The Capitol was at once the chief temple and the state headquarters of Rome.

22. *Embarquements*, arrestments. 'Embarquement' is a variant form of 'embargement', meaning a placing under embargo or arrest. Both forms are easily explained. 'Embargo,' which is Spanish, was sometimes anglicized 'embarge'; whence 'embargement'. 'Embarge,' in its turn, was sometimes written 'embark' or 'embarque'; whence 'embarquement'.

26. *At home*, in my own home.

upon my brother's guard, under my brother's guard, upon my brother's guarantee of protection. 'Upon' indicates the footing or guarantee upon which he is supposed to be present.

27. *the hospitable canon*, the law of hospitality.

30. *attended*, waited for.

30–1. *the cypress grove . . . the city mills*. Shakespeare frequently introduces these minute local descriptions, probably to give an air of truth to his pieces. So, in *Romeo and Juliet* (I. i. 128–9): 'Underneath the grove of sycamore That westward rooteth from the city's side' (Malone).

ACT II, SCENE I. 1. *augurer*. 'Augurs' or 'augurers' were a branch of the priesthood of Rome. Their business was prediction by the interpretation of omens and prodigies.

7. *Pray you, who does the wolf love?* 'Menenius asks, "whom does the wolf love?" implying that there are beasts which love nobody, and that among those beasts are the people' (Johnson).

18. *In . . . in*. A common conversational repetition, to be heard any day. Shakespeare, when he wrote conversations, scorned nothing that was conversational.

25. *condemned*, thought of, estimated. Cp. i. i. 274.

25-6. *of us o' the right-hand file*, by us of the conservative ranks. The 'left-hand file', by the same token, would be radical opposition, represented by the tribunes.

32-3. *a very little thief of occasion*, &c. You are a mighty impatient pair, Menenius means to say; a very little occasion will put you out. To convey this meaning it would have been enough to say 'a very little occasion will rob you', &c. But if 'occasion' can be said to 'rob', why not complete the metaphor and call it a 'thief'?

The form of the phrase may be compared with such a phrase as 'city of London'. There is nothing active or possessive about the 'of'; it merely connects in apposition. The meaning of 'city of London' is that London is a city. The meaning of 'thief of occasion' is that occasion is a thief.

34. *dispositions . . . pleasures*. The plural indicates, by a common Elizabethan idiom, that the 'disposition' and 'pleasure' of more than one person are spoken of. Cp. II. iii. 209, 230 ('loves'); IV. v. 138-9 ('leaves'), &c.

40. *single*, slight, paltry, insignificant. Cp. *Macbeth*, I. vi. 16: 'poor and single business.'

42. *towards the napes of your necks*. With allusion to the fable, which says that every man has a bag hanging before him, in which he puts his neighbour's faults, and another behind him, in which he stows his own' (Johnson).

48. *unmeriting*, undeserving. By the omission of 'as' before 'unmeriting' the sentence gains in speed.

51. *humorous*, whimsical, capricious. We still talk in this sense of 'a man of humours'.

52. *not a drop of allaying Tiber*, not a drop of water to allay its heat.

53. *something imperfect in favouring the first complaint*, somewhat imperfect, because of a way I have of favouring the first complainant. I suppose this means that he gave the impression, when he was on the bench, of being keener to get through and away than to hear both sides and give deliberate judgement.

56. *motion*, motive.

56-7. *one that converses more*, &c., one that is more conversant with the rear-end of night than with the brow of the morning; or, as Johnson puts it, rather a late lier down than an earlier riser. This is the same 'of' as we found in l. 32 ('thief of occasion'). The 'buttock of the night' and 'the forehead of the morning' mean night which is the buttock of the day and morning which is its forehead.

59. *spend my malice in my breath*: instead of hoarding it up in silence.

60. *wealsmen*, commonwealsmen, pillars of the commonwealth. For 'weal' cp. i. i. 157.

I cannot call you Lycurguses, I cannot call you 'great statesmen. Lycurgus, the Spartan legislator (ninth century B.C.), was one of the most famous names of antiquity. As the reputed author of the Spartan constitution he passed into a synonym for enlightened statecraft.

63. *delivered the matter well*, stated the case well (i.e. the case against Coriolanus).

65. *the ass in compound with the major part of your syllables*, i.e. most of your words with a large mixture of the ass in them, most of what you say very foolish. The phrase sounds like a punning version of a grammar rule: 'as in compound with major part of syllables'; but I have failed like others to find such a rule in the most likely place, *Lilly's Latin Grammar*. 'Ass' and 'as' is an old jingle: to be found in *Hamlet*, v. ii. 43.

67. *they lie deadly that tell you have good faces*. This jest has not been understood. To understand it we must go back to 'ass'. We are in the region of desperate puns. After 'ass' and 'as' in l. 65 it was easy to think of 'ace'. 'Ass' and 'ace' were pronounced alike, and Shakespeare had been very guilty of the pun about twelve years before, in *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, v. i. 315-17 ('Less than an ace, man, for he is dead; he is nothing.' 'With the help of a surgeon, he might yet recover, and prove an ass').

It was this 'ace' that suggested 'faces'. 'Faces' was a regular word for 'face-cards' (i.e. king, queen, knave), and 'face' and 'ace' ran naturally together. Cp. Cotton's *Complete Gamester* (1674): 'If you have neither ace nor face you make throw up your game' (*N.E.D.*). On this and the ordinary meaning of 'faces' Menenius puns. You are worthy 'asses', he says, and speaking of 'aces', they are deadly liars that report you have good 'faces'. This is not easy punning, but 'faces' is pointless without it.

69. *this*, i.e. the character I have just given of myself.

69-70. *the map of my microcosm*, the map of my little world, the map of this little world which is me. It was an old idea that man was an epitome or miniature of the universe. The idea is literally expressed in the term 'microcosm' (Gk. *mikros*, small + *kosmos*, world). Menenius had already given a full-length application of it in his apologue (i. i. 101 f.).

71. *your bisson conspectuities*, your purblind visions. For 'bisson', cp. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 537: 'bisson rheum' (= blinding tears). It generally meant blind. 'Conspectuities' is a humorous or random formation from Lat. *conspectus*, sight, view (*N.E.D.*). The length and sound of it were meant to overwhelm. Cp. l. 130.

77-8. *ambitious for poor knaves' caps and legs*, ambitious to have poor knaves doff their caps and bow to you. To 'make a leg' was the phrase for making a bow or obeisance. You drew one leg backward.

78 f. Here Shakespeare transgresses history. The Tribunes had no such judicial functions. See I. i. 221 n.

80. *a fossat-seller*, a seller of faucets or taps for drawing liquor. 'Faucet' is still in dialect use in England. In the United States it is the ordinary word for a tap of any kind.

81. *rejourn*, adjourn.

85. *munmers*, maskers, masqueraders.

set up the bloody flag, raise the standard of battle, declare war forthwith. A red flag was the signal of battle. Cp. *Henry V.*, I. ii. 101: 'Stand for your own; unwind your bloody flag'; and

Julius Caesar, v. i. 13-15: 'The enemy comes on in gallant show; Their bloody sign of battle is hung out. And something to be done immediately.'

86. *dismiss the controversy bleeding*. Instead of healing the dispute, they only wound it further and send it away raw and bleeding. It was proverbial to say of a raw or unfinished affair that it still 'bled'. Cp. *The Buggbears* (1564), iv. iii: 'Thou hast sene nothings yet, to that thou shalt see. For yet it lies and bledest.'

91-2. Menenius's glibbing tongue, says Brutus, made him more in request at dinner-tables than on the benches in the Capitol. He was more successful as a diner-out than as a senator.

98. *a botcher's cushion*. A botcher is a mender of old clothes. He is to a tailor what a cobbler is to a shoemaker. To illustrate the cushion-stuffing, Aldis Wright quotes Lyly's *Midas*, v. ii: 'A dozen of beards, to stuff two dozen of cushions.'

102. *since Deucalion*. As we might say, 'since Noah.' In Greek legend Deucalion was the one man who survived the Flood.

105. *Good den*, good e'en, good even: a shortened form of 'God give you good even'.

113. *Juno* was the queen of the gods. Next moment Menenius appeals to her husband Jupiter.

117. *Take my cap, Jupiter*. He throws it in the air. Jupiter, the king of the gods, was specifically lord of the air, as his brother Neptune was lord of the sea, and his brother Pluto of hell.

127. *make a lip at the physician*, i. e. point at him, in disdain.

128. *Galen* (A. D. 131-201) was one of the two most celebrated physicians of antiquity.

130. *empiricute*, empirical, i. e. rule-of-thumb, unscientific, quackish. The word is an invention, like 'conspicuousness'. It is formed from 'empiric', on the analogy of 'pharmaceutic' (N.E.D.).

to, compared to.

131. *report*, reputation.

140. *the oaken garland*. See I. iii. 16 n., and II. ii. 97-103.

141. *disciplined Aufidius soundly*, given him a sound lesson.

146 *fidiused*. He plays on the name *Aufidius*.

147. *possessed*, informed. Cp. *Twelfth-Night*, II. iii. 151: 'Possess us, possess us; tell us something of him' (where 'possess us' = put us in possession of the information).

151. *the whole name*, the whole fame or credit.

156-7. *not without his true purchasing*, not without his having honestly earned them. 'Purchase' has its original general sense of 'acquire' (Fr. *pourchasser*). Cp. *Richard II*, I. iii. 282: 'Go, say I sent thee forth to purchase honour.'

166. *cicatrices*, scars.

167. *stand for his place*, i. e. for the consulship.

the repulse of Tarquin. Cp. II. ii. 92 f.

169-70. He begins to count them aloud, 'one i' the neck, and two i' the thigh'; then finishes his counting mentally, and concludes, 'there's (not seven but) nine that I know.'

179. *nervy*, sinewy. Cp. I. i. 144 ('nerves').

180. *advanc'd*, raised. See I. vi. 61 n.

declines, falls. 'Volumnia . . . says, that her son, to kill his enemy, has nothing to do but to lift his hand and let it fall' (Johnson).

180. *s.d. Sennet*: the name for a particular set of notes on the trumpet.

182. *Corioli gates.* Cp. I. viii. 9 n.

194. *My gracious silence, hail!* He salutes his wife who stands weeping silently.

199. *O my sweet lady, pardon.* 'To Valeria', according to modern editions. But perhaps he asks his wife to forgive him for jesting at her tears. The original has no stage direction.

204. *on's, of his.*

207-8. *some old crab-trees, &c.* This is a smack at their worship the Tribunes, who are silent witnesses of these ceremonies. 'Sour old things,' says Menenius, 'they positively won't be inoculated with a taste of you. They will have none of your sweet in their bitter.'

209-10. Menenius dismisses the subject of their opponents. 'Poor fellows,' he says, 'they can't help being what they are.'

216. *change of honours, fresh honours.*

217. *inherited, realized* (lit., possessed).

221-2. I had rather be their servant and take my own line than be their master at the expense of taking theirs.

226. *a rapture, a seizure, a paroxysm, a fit.* Cp. *The Hospital for London's Follies* (1602): 'Your darling will weep itself into a rapture, if you take not good heed' (Steevens).

227. *chats him, chats about him.*

malkin, slut. 'Malkin' or 'mawkin' was a familiar diminutive of Matilda (Maud). It was first used as a proverbial name for a woman of the lower classes. From this it passed into the meaning which it has here of a dirty servant wench, a slut, a slattern.

228. *Her richest lockram, her richest bit of lockram.* 'Lockram' was a certain kind of coarse wearing linen (Fr. *locrenan*, from *Locronan*, the name of a village in Brittany, where it was formerly made).

reechy is a form of 'reeky', which means smoky. So, as here, grimy, filthy. In *Hamlet*, III. iv. 184, we read of 'a pair of reechy kisses'.

229. *bulks* were the projections of shops on to the street. Butchers and fishmongers displayed their goods on them; tailors and cobblers sat and worked on them.

230. *ridges horsed.* People sat astride on the ridges of the roofs.

231. *With variable complexions,* with the most varied characters, with all sorts and conditions of people. 'Complexion' has here its common meaning of disposition or temperament; literally, the 'combination' of qualities of which a man's character is composed (Lat. *com-*, together, *plectere*, to plait, twine).

232. *Seld-shown flamens, flamens* who seldom show themselves, who seldom appear in public. 'Seld' is an archaic form of 'seldom'; it occurs twice elsewhere in Shakespeare. 'Flamens' was the Roman name for a special body of priests, fifteen in number, attached to the service of special deities. It is here used for priests in general.

234. *a vulgar station, a standing-place among the crowd.*

235. *the war of white and damask, the war of white and red.* It is a figure of the poets to speak of the roses contending with the lilies in

a lady's cheek. Cp. *Lucrece*. 71-2: 'This silent war of lilies and of roses Which Tarquin view'd in her fair face's field.'

236. *nicely-gawded*, daintily done up.

237. *Phæbus' burning kisses*. Need I say that Phæbus is the Sun, and that they risk sun-burning?

238. *whatsoever god*, whatsoever god he be.

243-4. *He cannot temperately transport . . . begin and end*, i.e. 'he cannot carry his honours temperately from where he should begin to where he should end.' The word *transport* includes the ending as well as the beginning' (Malone). It is not in the nature of Coriolanus to proceed equably from honour to honour: at some point or other he will kick over the traces and upset everything.

245-6. *Doubt not . . . but they*, doubt not but that the commoners, &c.

247. *Upon their ancient malice*, out of their old class hatred.

248. *which*, i.e. 'cause.'

*253. *The napless vesture of humility*, the suppliant's threadbare gown. This is Shakespeare's rendering of North's 'poor gown' and 'mean apparel'. For the passage in North, see p. 148; for the story of how the gown became threadbare, see II. ii. 142 n.

255. *'Tis right*, 'tis exactly as you say.

259. *have . . . and to put*. We should say, 'to have . . . and put.'

261. *as our good wills*, as we are thoroughly determined to be to him also. Cp. I. ix. 18 (to 'effect one's good will' = to do one's honest best).

263. *For an end*, to bring matters to a head.

264. *suggest*, prompt, insinuate, put into their minds: the regular Shakespearean meaning.

265. *still*, constantly.

to his power, to the best of his power.

267. *Dispropertied their freedoms*, deprived them of the property of their freedoms, dispossessed them of their liberties.

270. *provand*, provender, provisions (orig. from Lat. *præbenda*, what is duly provided). See I. ii. 24 n.

274. *teach the people*, i.e. lecture them, as he does in I. i. 170 f.

275. *put upon't*, put on to it.

278. *darken him*, obscure him, eclipse him. Cp. iv. vii. 5.

282-4. 'Here our author has attributed some of the customs of his own age to a people who were wholly unacquainted with them. Few men of fashion in his time appeared at a tournament without a lady's favour upon his arm: and sometimes when a nobleman had tilted with uncommon grace and agility, some of the fair spectators used to *fling a scarf* or glove 'upon him as he pass'd' (Malone).

288-9. *the time . . . the event*. 'The time' is the present time, the 'event' is the issue, the future. Let us keep our ears and eyes open to everything that passes, he says, and our hearts braced for what is to ensue. The ensuing event, we understand, is the destruction of Coriolanus.

289. *Have with you*: a phrase of the time, meaning 'I'll go along with you'.

ACT II, SCENE II. S.D. *Enter two Officers, &c.* The full direction in the first edition of the play (1623) is instructive: 'Enter two Officers,

to lay Cushions, as it were, in the Capitoll.' This 'as it were' is a delicate reminder of the modesty of the Elizabethan stage. It was not thought necessary to simulate the interior of the Capitol further than by laying cushions upon benches. Given the cushions, it was thought you might make shift to imagine the rest.

3. *of, by.*

5. *vengeance proud*: as we say, 'proud with a vengeance.'

16. *lets*, i.e. he lets. A common conversational omission.

18. *he waverd*, he had waved, he would wave. 'Waved' is subjunctive. Cp. iv. vi. 113, 115.

22. *discover him their opposite*, reveal him as their adversary. 'Opposite' was the Elizabethan word for an opponent.

23. *affect*, desire, aim at.

28. *degrees*, steps: the original sense (Fr. *degré*, Lat. *gradus*). Cp. *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 24 f (of the ambitious man): 'But when he once attains the upmost round, He then unto the ladder turns his back, Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees By which he did ascend.'

as those, as the ascent of those.

30. *bonneted*, bonneted to them, did nothing more than take off their bonnets to them. Cp. III. ii. 73 (Volumnia to Coriolanus): 'Go to them, with this bonnet in thy hand.'

30-1. *Without any further deed*, &c., without doing anything else at all to get them into esteem and repute with the people.

41. s.d. *Lictors*. The Lictors were a sort of armed police attached as bodyguards to magistrates. They marched before them whenever they appeared in public, clearing the way, keeping bystanders aside, and generally enforcing respect to the masters of the state. They were there also to arrest offenders, and even to scourge and behead, at the magistrate's word.

the Tribunes take theirs also by themselves. 'Originally they [the Tribunes] had no official relations with the Senate, but afterwards, by virtue of their inviolability, they obtained the right of sitting on their benches at the open door of the senate-house, so as to be present at the deliberations, and in case of need to interfere' (*Dict. of Classical Antiq.*, Seyffert-Nettleship).

That Shakespeare had some idea of this is clear from his putting the Tribunes by themselves, and from Coriolanus's remark in III. i. 100 ('Let them have cushions by you'). On the other hand he appears to neglect it in l. 62 below.

42. *of, about.*

43. *To send for Titus Lartius*, who had been left behind in Corioli (I. ix. 75). He enters again at the opening of III. i.

45. *gratify*, reward, requite. In *The Merchant of Venice*, iv. i. 407 ('Antonio, gratify this gentleman') it means to give a gratuity.

49. *well-found*, fortunately met with.

54-6. *make us think*, &c., make us rather think our state's defective for requital than we defective to stretch it out. That is, rather make us think that it is the state which lacks the means to requite him than that we could lack the will to stretch those means to the utmost for the purpose of requiting him. 'It' in l. 56 refers to 'state'.

57. *your kindest ears*, the kindest hearing you can give us.

58. *Your loving motion toward the common body*, your friendly mediation with the common people.

59. *To yield what passes here*: either (1) to grant what the Senate passes (said of the people); or (2) in reporting what passes here (said of the Tribunes reporting to the people). Perhaps (1) is better.

59-60. *We are convened Upon a pleasing treaty*, it is a pleasing proposal we are convened to consider. 'Treaty' has its earlier meaning of proposal or negotiation. Cp. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. ix. 62: 'send humble treaties.'

62. *The theme of our assembly*, i. e. Coriolanus. 'Our' assembly is misleading. The Tribunes were not members of the Senate. See note on l. 41.

63. *bless'd to do*, blessed in doing, i. e. happy to do.

65. *That's off*, that's off the point, that's nothing to the purpose.

68. *more pertinent*. It was your remark that was 'off', he says, not mine.

71. *s.d. offers to go away*, makes to go away.

78. *sooth'd*, flattered. Cp. I. ix. 44.

79. *as they weigh*, according to their merits, as they are slight or solid.

81. *alarum*. Cp. I. iv. 9 n.

82. *monster'd*, made monstrous marvels of.

84. *That's thousand to one good one*, that has but one good one in a thousand.

86. *Than one on's ears to hear it*, than that one of his ears should hear what he had done.

*89. *valour . . . the chiefest virtue*. 'Now in those days, valiantness was honoured in Rome above all other virtues: which they called *Virtus*, by the name of virtue itself, as including in that general name all other special virtues besides. So that *Virtus* in the Latin was as much as valiantness' (North's *Plutarch: Life of Coriolanus*).

90. *the haver*, the possessor of it.

91-2. *cannot . . . be singly counterpois'd*. There is no single person living, he says, to put in the scales against him.

*92-106. See Plutarch's account, p. 142.

*92. *At sixteen years*. A more vivid version of Plutarch's words, 'being but a stripling.'

93. *Tarquin*. Tarquin the Proud (Tarquinius Superbus) was the last king of Rome. He was driven out in 510 B. C.

made a head for Rome, raised a force against it. A 'head' is a force raised, especially an insurrectionary force. Cp. III. i. 1 below, and 1 *Henry IV*, I. iii. 284: 'To save our heads by raising of a head.'

94. *Beyond the mark of others*, beyond anything that others could reach.

dictator: a magistrate appointed at crises of the state, to 'put the thing through'. He took precedence, while the crisis lasted, of all other authority.

96. *Amazonian*, smooth as a woman warrior's. The Amazons were a military community of women, famous in Greek story.

99. *opposers*. Cp. I. v. 22.

100. *struck him on his knee*, struck him a blow that brought him to his knees.

101. *When he might act the woman in the scene*, when, being but a stripling, he might have played the woman on that warlike stage instead of so valorously playing the man. The idea and language of the line ('act,' 'woman,' 'scene') are drawn from the practice of the Elizabethan stage, which committed all female parts to boys and smooth-faced striplings. When the actors come to Elsinore, Hamlet jests with the 'young lady' of the troupe, and prays God that her voice be not yet cracked (*Hamlet*, II. ii. 453-7).

103. *Was brow-bound with the oak*. See I. iii. 16 n.

103-4. *His pupil age* *Man-enter'd thus*, having thus, a mere stripling, entered in his time of pupilage the ranks of manhood.

*105. *seventeen battles*. The number was suggested by Plutarch's sentence: 'many wounds and cuts upon his body which he had received in *seventeen* years' service in the wars.'

106. *lurch'd all swords of the garland*, lifted the garland, the crown of glory, from all other swords. 'Garland' has already occurred in this sense in I. i. 190, and I. ix. 60. To 'lurch' is to rob; hence, to lift or carry off at others' expense.

It was used also in cards. To 'lurch' was to win a maiden set, and a 'lurch' came to mean a double hand, an easy victory. If Shakespeare had this in mind it gives finish to his sentence. Coriolanus not only carried off the garland from all competitors: he did it with perfect ease.

The phrase was noticed. It certainly had struck Ben Jonson when he wrote in his *Silent Woman*, in 1610, 'You have lunched your friends of the better half of the garland by concealing this part of the plot' (v. i.).

108. *Speak him home*, speak adequately of him, do him justice. To 'speak home' on any matter is to go to the heart of it.

112-13. *his sword, death's stamp*, Where it did mark, it took. His sword was like a seal of death: every impression 'took': every stroke was fatal.

114-15. *whose every motion . . . with dying cries*. Every motion he made, in this dance of death, was timed by the tune of dying cries. The cries of the slaughtered followed his motions as regularly as music follows a dancer.

116. *the mortal gate*, the deadly gate, the gate through which it seemed death to enter.

116-17. *which he painted With shunless destiny*. 'Which' may be the gate or it may be the city. Whether gate or city, he set his bloody mark upon it, the mark of inevitable destiny, of death.

118-19. *struck Corioli like a planet*, struck it, that is, and blasted it. That planets sometimes struck and blasted was a firm belief of Shakespeare's time. He often refers to it. We read in *Hamlet*, I. i. 162, of planets 'striking'; in *Lear*, III. iv. 61, of 'star-blasting'; in *Timon*, IV. iii. 108, of 'planetary plagues'. Since the fates of men were thought to be controlled by the stars it was natural to attribute pestilence and the strokes of lightning to their agency.

119. *Now all's his*. He changes suddenly to the vivid present.

120. *the din of war*: the noise of 'the battle' (I. 123) between Cominius and the Volsces. See I. v. 9 f.

121. *his doubled spirit*. He had so much more spirit than other men that he could take 'second spirit' as one takes 'second wind', and having finished one battle be ready and brisk for another.

122. *fatigate*, fatigued: formed straight from the Latin, *fatigatus*.

125. *a perpetual spoil*, one long havoc of blood. 'Spoil' has here its hunting sense of the bleeding carcase of slaughtered game. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, III. i. 206 (of the bloody badges of Caesar's murderers): 'here thy hunters stand, Sign'd in thy spoil, and crimson'd in thy lethe.'

128-9. *He cannot but with measure*, &c. 'That is, no honour will be too great for him: he will show a mind equal to any elevation' (Johnson). This is what the speaker meant, but the irony of 'measure' is unmistakable. To observe 'measure' in his course of honour was precisely what Coriolanus could never do.

130. *as*, as if.

132. *misery*, poverty, destitution.

132-4. In all that Coriolanus does he has no ulterior motives. Great action, to him, is its own reward, an end in itself. He does great deeds (as Johnson puts it) for the sake of doing them, and spends his time for the sake of spending it, content that it should end there, and lead to nothing.

142-3. Cp. II. i. 252-5.

142. *the gown*, the candidate's gown, the 'gown of humility' of II. iii. 44, the 'napless vesture of humility' of II. i. 253. The idea that candidates wore a threadbare gown is erroneous. They wore, on the contrary, as Aldis Wright reminds us, quite a becoming dress: a single gown, white, pipeclayed till it shone.

The error, which does no harm, came about very naturally. Amyot the Frenchman, whose translation of Plutarch North followed, called the gown 'simple', and again 'humble'. North, going one better, called it 'poor', and 'mean'. Shakespeare, advancing on North, lifted it clean out of fact into poetry. It became in him 'the napless vesture of humility'.

naked. He refers to the necessity of showing one's wounds.

144. *pass this doing*, pass it over, get off doing it.

145. *their voices*, their votes, or the privilege of exercising them.

146. *Put them not to't*, don't press them too hard.

149. *Your honour with your form*. Take the one with the other, he says: the honour you seek with the form you must go through to obtain it.

155. *Do not stand upon't*, don't insist on it, don't make a stand on this objection.

156-7. *We recommend . . . to them*. We recommend our purpose to you, Tribunes of the people, and entrust to you the communication of it to the people.

161. *require*, ask. 'Require,' like 'demand,' had a less dogmatic sense then than now. Cp. III. ii. 45.

ACT II, SCENE III. 1. *Once*, once for all: an idiom now obsolete.

2. *require*. Cp. II. ii. 161 n.

7. *we are to put our tongues into those wounds and speak for them*. As Antony did for Caesar, though he feigned the contrary: 'Were I

Brutus. And Brutus Antony, there were an Antony Would ruffle up your spirits, and put a tongue In every wound of Caesar' (*Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 230-3).

15-16. Coriolanus, says First Citizen, will need but little help from us to enable him to think us no better than monsters. He means to say that Coriolanus thinks so already.

16. *once*, once when.

*17. *the corn*. Cp. I. i. 85, 195, and North's *Plutarch*, p. 149.

20. *abram*: a corruption of 'abron' = auburn. It was a jest of the time to talk of *Cain-* and *Abram-coloured* beards.

24-5. *their consent of one direct way*, their agreement to take one direct course.

31-4. *southward . . . fog . . . rotten dews*. See I. iv. 30 *n*.

38. *you may, you may*: a colloquial idiom, meaning, 'Go on, go on, do!'

40-1. The vote need not be unanimous: a majority is sufficient.

44. *a gown of humility*. See II. ii. 142 *n*.

47. *by particulars*, to each of us singly.

62-3. *like the virtues Which our divines lose by 'em*, as they forget the virtuous precepts which our divines throw away upon them.

65. *In wholesome manner*, i.e. reasonably, or in such a manner as they can swallow, as will go down with them.

85. *A match*, a bargain.

90. *stand with*, accord with.

101. *my sworn brother the people*. As if he and the people had sworn, according to the old custom of comrades-at-arms, to stand by each other in everything. Coriolanus is bitterly ironical, for flattery in such a compact is the unpardonable sin. That the people are willing to be flattered shows that they are not fit for such comradeship.

102. *condition*, disposition. Cp. v. iv. 11.

106. *be off to them*, be off with my cap to them.

107. *the bewitchment of some popular man*, the bewitching manner of some people-pleaser. 'Popular' in Shakespeare's time meant generally vulgar, plebeian, and 'popularity' association with the vulgar. Cp. III. i. 105, v. ii. 42.

115. *seal*, put the seal upon, confirm.

120-1. *starve . . . deserve*. The rhyme is correct. 'Deserve' was pronounced 'desarve', as in Ireland to-day, where so many of our old pronunciations survive. Further, 'starve' is in the old copies printed 'sterve' (pronounced 'starve'), which gives a rhyme to both eye and ear. 'Sterve' is the true form. It lasted to Dryden's day, and was changed to 'starve' because it was pronounced so.

121. *hire*, fee, reward.

122. *this wolfish toge*, this wolfish toga, this wolfish gown. Standing there in his white gown of humility, grinding his teeth with ill-concealed rage, he feels like a wolf in sheep's clothing.

'Toge' and 'togue', versions of the Latin *toga*, were forms of the time and occur in its dictionaries. The first edition of this play (1623) has 'tongue' for 'toge'. So in the first edition of *Othello* (1622): 'tongued consuls' in mistake for 'toged consuls'.

123. *Hob and Dick*. Two of the commonest names of the time: as

we might say, Tom and Dick. 'Hob' is Rob or Robin. It is rustic : a 'country hob' meant a country bumpkin. Both names look odd in Rome.

124. *needless vouchers*, unnecessary guarantees.

126. *antique* : accent 'antique.' So always in Shakespeare.

134. *Watch'd*, kept watch or guard.

146. *limitation*, appointed time.

147. *Endue*, endow : the regular meaning.

148. *the official marks*, the insignia of office.

149. *Anon*, forthwith. So l. 152.

150. *the custom of request*, the custom of asking for their votes.

152. *upon your approbation*, to approve your election. 'Upon' indicates the business to be transacted, as in II. ii. 60.

162. *weeds*, garments (OE. *wæd*). So l. 229 below.

176. *aged custom*. If Shakespeare had cared a jot about such things he would have remembered that the practice could not possibly be old. It came in plainly with the Republic, and on his own chronology the Republic was less than twenty years old, for Coriolanus was sixteen when the last of the kings was finally expelled (II. ii. 92-3).

182. *ignorant to see't*, ignorant in the seeing of it, i.e. too ignorant to see it.

185. *lesson'd*, instructed (by us). Cp. l. 243 below.

188. *weal*, commonwealth. Cp. I. i. 157.

189. *arriving*. For this transitive use, cp. *Julius Caesar*, I. ii. 110 : 'ere we could arrive the point proposed,' and *Paradise Lost*, II. 409 : 'Ere he arrive the happy isle.'

192. *plebeii* : the Latin form, here only.

199. *touch'd*, put to the touch, put to the test.

204. *article*, stipulation, conditions. Cp. I. ix. 77 ('articulate').

207. *pass'd him*, passed him over.

208. *free*, frank, undisguised.

209. *loves*. For the plural cp. I. x. 34 n., and l. 230 below.

213. *rectorship*, guidance. Were tongues given you, he asks, that you might cry out with them against your better judgement ?

215. *of*, on.

217. *He's not confirmed*. See l. 151-2.

220. *to piece'em*, to piece them out, to supplement them.

225. *therefore*, for the purpose, i.e. to bark. 'Therefore' and 'to do so' repeat each other.

227. *Enforce*, lay stress upon. Or, as Johnson puts it, 'object his pride, and enforce the objection.'

228. *forget not*, i.e. in your remarks.

229. *the humble weed*. Cp. II. ii. 142 n., and l. 162 above.

230-1. *but your loves . . . took from you*, it was only your love . . . that took from you.

232. *The apprehension of his present portance*, the apprehension naturally excited by his present bearing. We still speak of a man's 'port', meaning his bearing or carriage, and 'portance' is only a bulky edition of 'port'.

240. *rather* : pronounced, and sometimes spelt, as a slurred monosyllable, 'ra'er.' So 'wh'er' = whether, &c.

242. *voice*. As a 'voice' is a vote, so to 'voice' is to vote. The word expresses the method of voting: by voice.

244-5. *How youngly*, &c. Cp. II. ii. 92 f.

*245-53. This highly uninspired passage repeats the first two sentences in Plutarch's *Life of Coriolanus*:

'The house of the Martians at Rome was of the number of the patricians, out of the which hath sprung many noble personages: whereof Ancus Martius was one, King Numa's daughter's son, who was King of Rome after Tullus Hostilius. Of the same house were Publius and Quintus, who brought Rome their best water they had by conduits. Censorinus also came of that family, that was so surnamed because the people had chosen him Censor twice.'

Shakespeare falls here into the same mistake as in I. iv. 56-7 (where see note). Plutarch, looking back on the history of the Marcian family, mentions Publius, Quintus, and Censorinus as famous members of it. All these belonged to a later generation than Coriolanus. Shakespeare, vamping away briskly, takes them all for ancestors.

251. *And Censorinus*, &c. After l. 250 the original goes on: 'And Nobly nam'd, so twice being Censor, Was his great Ancestor.' Clearly a line has fallen out. Our l. 251, concocted out of the passage in Plutarch, is the best of several suggestions for supplying its place.

257. *Scaling*, weighing.

260. *putting on*, instigation.

261. *presently*, instantly.

264-5. *This mutiny . . . for greater*. Better to hazard this mutiny than stay for the greater hazard that undoubtedly awaits us if he is elected.

267-8. *both observe and answer The vantage of his anger*, look out for and be prompt to seize the advantage which his anger will give us against him. 'Answer' means strictly to be quick to respond to.

270. *their own*, their own movement.

ACT III. SCENE I. 1. *had made new head*, had raised a fresh force. Cp. II. ii. 93.

3. *Our swifter composition*, our coming to terms more swiftly than we should otherwise have done. With this use of the comparative 'swifter', cp. III. iii. 54 ('rougher').

5. *road*, inroad.

7. *ages*, lifetime. For the plural, cp. I. ix. 34 n.

9. *On safe-guard*, under safe-conduct.

10. *for*, for that, because.

16. *To hopeless restitution*, beyond all hope of restitution.

19. *I wish I had a cause to seek him there*. This is the true dramatic irony. The cause was already well under way.

23. *prank them*, trick themselves out.

24. *Against all noble sufferance*, beyond what any noble spirit can endure.

28. *pass'd*, been passed by, approved by.

32. *fall in broil*. Cp. 'fall in rage' (II. iii. 266), and our own 'fall in love'.

35. *why rule you not their teeth?* 'The metaphor is from men's setting a bull-dog or mastiff upon any one' (Warburton).

*42-4. *When corn was given them gratis, &c.* See North's *Plutarch*, p. 149, and l. 112 f.

43. *Scandall'd*, defamed.

44. *Time-pleasers . . . nobleness*: in North, 'people-pleasers,' 'the nobility.'

46. *sithence*, since: an old form. It occurs in the corresponding passage in North.

47-8. *Not unlike, Each way, to better yours*, not unlikely, every way, to do your (Consul's) business better than yourself.

49. *yond* and 'yon' were used indifferently.

56. *yoke with him for tribune*, be fellow Tribune with Brutus.

57. *abus'd*, duped, deceived.

paltering, shuffling.

59. *dishonour'd rub*, dishonourable obstruction or impediment. A 'rub' is an obstruction or inequality on a bowling-green which catches the bowl and turns it out of its course.

'Dishonour'd' means full of dishonour, dishonourable. It is not a participle, but an adjective formed from the noun 'dishonour'. Cp. l. 71 below ('honour'd'); l. 290 ('deserved'); *Macbeth*, iv. i. 24, 'the ravin'd shark' (full of ravin, ravenous).

falsely, treacherously.

65. *many*. So the Fourth Folio edition (1685). The first three have *meynie* or *meyny*, which some take to be 'meiny', meaning a retinue or following. But 'the many', meaning the multitude, is better every way, and 'meynie' is an easy misprint.

66-7. 'Let them look in the mirror which I hold up to them, a mirror which does not flatter, and see themselves' (Johnson).

68. *soothing*. Cp. i. ix. 44; ii. ii. 78.

*69. *The cockle of rebellion*. Cockle is what we call corn-cockle. Rebellion in the state is compared to cockle weed among corn. The whole figure comes from North's *Plutarch*: see p. 149.

71. *the honour'd number*: in modern jargon, 'the aristocratic section of the community.' For 'honour'd' = honourable, cf. l. 59 n.

77. *measles*, scurvy wretches, scabs. The word was in use in Shakespeare's time in its modern sense, but there is no doubt that he meant it for some form of leprosy or skin disease. In older English 'misel' or 'mesel' was a regular word for a leper.

Any doubt on the matter must be dispelled by 'tetter' in the following line, and the passage from *Hamlet* cited in the note upon it. Coriolanus, it will be seen, is consistent even in his choice of abuse. He had called them 'scabs' before (i. i. 172).

78. *tetter us*, cover us with eruptions. Cp. *Hamlet*, i. v. 71-3: 'And a most instant tetter bark'd about, Most lazar-like, with vile and loathsome crust. All my smooth body', where 'lazar-like' means like a leper.

81. *of their infirmity*, of like weakness with them.

85-7. I will take care, he means, that principles so poisonous shall have no opportunity of extending their influence beyond their present sphere. In other words, Coriolanus shall never be consul.

88. *this Triton of the minnows.* Triton, in classical mythology, was Neptune's trumpeter. Listen, says Coriolanus, to this Triton of the small fry, this glorified drum-major of the masses.

89. *from the canon,* contrary to rule: i.e. an unconstitutional expression. Constitutionally a Tribune could determine nothing on his own authority. He was only the mouthpiece of the will of the people.

For 'from' = away from, and so, contrary to, cp. *Twelfth-Night*, I. v, 202: 'But this is from my commission.'

92. *Given Hydra here to choose an officer,* given Hydra here (pointing to the crowd) the right to choose an officer. The Hydra was the monstrous manyheaded reptile of Greek legend which Hercules had such difficulty in killing. Its manyheadedness made it an apt nickname for the 'manyheaded multitude'.

95. *The horn and noise of the monster's,* the noisy horn of the monster, his noisy trumpeter. Coriolanus remembers that he had called him 'Triton' just before; and we are reminded, even in this air of abuse, of Wordsworth's line, 'Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.' For the form of the expression 'horn and noise' see note on I. viii. 4. *in, into.*

97. *vail your ignorance,* bow down your ignorance before him, let the ignorance that gave him power bow down before him. For 'vail' (Fr. *avaler*), = lower, cp. *Merchant of Venice*, I. i. 28 (of a vessel in a storm): 'Vailing her high-top lower than her ribs.'

*97-8. *awake Your dangerous lenity,* slumber no longer in this dangerous lenity but rouse yourselves and be severe. Cp. North's *Plutarch*, p. 143.

100. *Let them have cushions by you,* admit them to your benches, let them be benchers, senators. For 'cushions' cp. stage-direction at opening of II. ii; and IV. vii. 43. For the relation of the Tribunes to the Senate see II. ii. 41 n.

101. *no less,* no less than senators.

102-3. *When, both your voices blended,* &c., 'when, the voices of the senate and the people being blended together, the predominant taste of the compound smacks more of the populace than the senate' (Malone). 'Theirs' refers to 'taste'.

105. *popular, vulgar, plebeian.* Cp. II. iii. 107.

108. *up, roused, astir.*

109. *confusion, ruin, destruction:* a sense then common but now obsolete. Cp. I. 189, and *Macbeth*, II. iii. 72: 'Confusion now hath made his master-piece!' (of the murder of Duncan).

*112 f. What follows is drawn almost word for word from North's *Plutarch*. See p. 150.

119. *More worthier:* the common double comparative, used, like double superlatives and double negatives, for emphasis.

120. *Was not our recompense,* was not given to them by us in recompense.

121. *press'd, enlisted by force.* Cp. I. ii. 9.

122. *the navel of the state* means the very centre of it. The expression occurs nowhere else in Shakespeare.

123. *thread the gates,* pass or file through them. So we talk of 'threading' our way.

126-7. *The accusation*, &c. See I. i. 15-26, 83-91.

128. *All cause unborn*, no cause whatever existing for such an accusation.

motive: a correction of the original 'native'. If 'native' is right it must mean 'natural parent' or something of the kind, as Johnson suggested.

130. *this bosom multiplied*, this multitudinous bosom, this bosom of the manyheaded multitude. There is no reason to change to 'bisson multitude', as some editors have done. It is a poor argument for 'bisson' (purblind) that it has already occurred in II. i. 71. And we does not digest with our eyes.

But can a bosom digest? No; but it is the bosom that first feels the load of repletion and indigestion. Had Shakespeare's idea been simply digestion he would have used 'belly'. It is because the courtesy-crammed multitude *cannot* digest, can indeed do nothing more than gorge what the Senate gives it, that he uses 'bosom'.

This is confirmed by the only other passages in Shakespeare where 'bosom' occurs in this connexion. They are 2 *Henry IV*, I. iii. 95-8 (of the beastly treatment of their favourites by the 'many'): 'Thou beastly feeder, art so full of him That thou provok'st thyself to cast him up. So, so, thou common dog, didst thou disgorge Thy glutton bosom of the royal Richard'; and *Macbeth*, V. iii. 44: 'Cleanse the stuff'd bosom of that perilous stuff Which weighs upon the heart.'

In both of these passages, as in ours, the bosom suffers from repletion, and is the seat, not of digestion, but of indigestion. The first is a striking parallel in more than language; that 'beastly feeder', the insatiate multitude, is precisely the subject of Coriolanus's thoughts. The second is a description of ordinary dyspepsia. Editors have been accustomed to defend 'bosom' in our passage by saying that a bosom which disgorges (as in 2 *Henry IV*) must be able to digest. This is smart and lawyer-like, nothing more.

131-2. *Let deeds express*, &c., judge from their actions what they are likely to say.

136. *our cares*, our care for them. See I. i. 69-91.

ope, open: only used in the predicate (e.g. 'the gates are ope', but not 'the ope gates').

140-1. May everything divine and human that can give force to an oath seal and attest the truth of what I am to end with.

141. *This double worship*, this divided dignity, this divided authority of the Senate and people. This sense of 'worship' survives in legal titles: 'Your Worship,' like 'Your Honour'.

143. *without all reason*, beyond all reason, without any reason. Cp. *Macbeth*, III. ii. 11: 'Things without all remedy.'

gentry, gentle birth.

144. *conclude*, come to any conclusion.

145. *omit*, pass over, neglect.

147-8. *purpose so barr'd*, &c., being thus debarred from any resolute policy it follows that everything we do is piecemeal and haphazard.

beseech you: the 'I' in such phrases was commonly dropped in speech.

149. *less fearful than discreet*, in whom discretion is stronger than fear.

151. *doubt the change on't*, fear a change in't. He appeals to them as men who are too much attached to the essential constitution of the state to fear violent measures and changes in its behalf. He hints at the abolition of the Tribuneship. In l. 170 he hints no longer.

153. *jump*, risk. Desperate diseases, he means, need desperate remedies. For 'jump' cp. *Macbeth*, I. vii. 7: 'We'd jump the life to come' (i. e. risk it, take our chance of it). It is easy to see how this meaning was reached: from 'jumping' an obstacle to 'treating it lightly, and from that to 'risking', 'taking your chance.'

155. *The multitudinous tongue*. Coriolanus's mind is obsessed by this image. He sees the people always as a monster of multitude, with its many heads, its 'bosom multiplied', and its multitudinous tongue.

158. *integrity* is the opposite of 'division' (Lat. *integer*, whole, entire). In this sense a state has 'integrity' when it acts as one whole, when it has organic unity.

164. *these bald tribunes*. The jest of youth at middle age. It is difficult to be at once bald and majestic, as Julius Caesar found. Ordinarily Shakespeare takes the other side, and suggests, according to the proverb, that bushy-headed people have more hair than wits. This is a touch of nature. He was prematurely bald himself.

166. *the greater bench*, the Senate. Cp. l. 105.

169. *Let what is meet*, &c., 'let it be said by you that what is *meet* to be done *must* be meet, i. e. *shall be done*, and put an end at once to the tribunitian power' (Malone).

172. *The aediles*. These were the Plebeian Aediles, two in number. They were appointed 494 B.C. at the same time with the Tribuneship of the Plebs, as servants of the Tribunes. . . . It was their duty to make arrests at the bidding of the Tribunes; to carry out the death-sentences which they passed, by hurling the criminal down from the Tarpeian rock; to look after the importation of corn; to watch the traffic in the markets; and to organize and superintend the Plebeian and Roman Games. Like the Tribunes, they could only be chosen from the body of the Plebs' (*Dict. of Classical Antiq.*, Seyffert-Nettleship).

174. *Attach*, arrest.

176. *to thine answer*, to answer the charge.

177. *surety him*, be sureties for him.

189. *Confusion*. See l. 109 n.

You: he would say, 'Do *you* speak to them.'

204. *foundation* must be read with four syllables.

205. *which yet distinctly ranges*, which has still a clearly defined and recognized position. He fears that all ranks, orders, and distinctions in the state will be swept away in the approaching anarchy. With 'range' here cp. our phrase 'to range in order'.

207-8. *Or . . . Or*, either . . . or.

209. *in whose power*, in the exercise of whose power.

211. *present*, instant.

212. *the rock Tarpeian*. A precipitous rock on the Capitoline Hill, down which state criminals were thrown.

230. *All will be naught*, all will come to naught, all will be lost.

235. *tent*. Cp. I. ix. 31.

240. *worthy*, well-justified.

241. *One time will owe another*. It is their time now; it will be ours to-morrow. They'll pay for this triumph yet. The whirligig of time will bring in our revenges.

243. *Take up*, take on.

247. *tag*, tag-rag.

250. *whether*: pronounced, and often written, 'wh'er.'

271. *sure on 't*, i.e. be sure on 't.

273. *cry havoc*, give the signal for indiscriminate slaughter. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, III. i. 273: 'Cry "Havoc!" and let slip the dogs of war'.

274. *modest*, moderate.

275. *holp*, helped: an old form, short for 'holpen'.

286. *one danger*, one long danger, one continuous source of danger. This is difficult, but possible.

290. *deserved*, deserving. Cp. III. i. 59 n.

291. *Jove's own book* probably means the rolls and registers of the Capitol, which was Jove's temple. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, III. i. 39-41: 'The question of his death is enrolled in the Capitol; the glory not extenuated, wherein he was worthy, nor his offences enforced, for which he suffered death.'

302. *clean kam*, clean contrary; in other words, pure perversion. 'Kam' (or 'cam') is a Welsh word, meaning crooked. It was dialect in Shakespeare's time, and it survives in dialect in the North of England in the sense of perverse, obstinate.

303. *Merely*, absolutely: the original sense (Lat. *merus*, pure, undiluted).

311. *unscann'd*, blind, inconsiderate.

312. *by process*, in an orderly regular manner, using the forms of law. Cp. I. 323.

320. *bolted*, sifted, refined. To 'bolt' meal is to refine it by sifting the meal from the bran.

323-4. *answer . . . to his utmost peril*, meet the charge against him, though it should mean his death.

324. *Noble tribunes*. Such flattery from a senator was scarce. It quite melts Sicinius. But he pretends not to have seen it, and therefore addresses his reply to Menenius. Some acknowledgement, however, was due, so he returns the epithet: 'Noble Menenius.'

325. *humane*, in Shakespeare, is always accented 'húmane'.

ACT III, SCENE II. 7. *muse*, wonder.

9. *woollen vassals*, home-spun varlets. The contrast is between the thick coarse clothes of the working people and the fine-spuns of the noble rich. Cp. *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, III. i. 81 (of the Athenian mechanics): 'What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here?'

10. *grouts*, fourpenny pieces. Petty trading is meant.

12. *ordinance*, rank.

23. *Ere they lack'd power*, before they had lost the power, while they still possessed the power. He should at least have waited until they had confirmed his election. Now they can refuse to confirm it.

24. *Ay, and burn too.* I think, with Aldis Wright, that this should be an *Aside*.

29. *a heart of mettle apt as yours.* So the Oxford Shakespeare, 'apt' meaning prompt, quick to take fire. The original is: 'a heart as little apt as yours,' where 'apt' has been supposed to mean 'susceptible to influence', 'easy to win over'.

32. *herd* is Theobald's correction of the original 'heart'. '*Herd*' was anciently spelt *heard*. Hence *heart* crept into the 'old copy' (Malone).

33. *The violent fit o' the time,* the present convulsion.

41. *But when extremities speak,* but when extremities call out for treatment.

42. *unsever'd, unseverable.* Cp. *Richard III*, i. iv. 27: 'Inestimable stones, unvalu'd jewels' (i.e. invaluable).

44. *lose.* Plural by suggestion from the plural idea in 'each of them'.

45. *demand, question.* Cp. II. ii. 161.

47. *The same you are not,* the very thing you are not.

49. *it*, i.e. policy, the policy of 'seeming the same you are not'.

51. *force, urge.*

52. *it lies you on,* it lies on you, is incumbent on you. For the order of the words, which is traditional, cp. *Richard II*, II. iii. 138: 'It stands your Grace upon to do him right.'

54. *prompts you,* suggests to you (like a prompter to a player).

55. *such . . . that.* We say 'such . . . as'.

56-7. *but rooted in Your tongue,* whose roots go no deeper than your tongue. The original has 'roted', which may be right, in the sense of 'got by rote'.

57. *of no allowance to your bosom's truth,* wholly disacknowledged by the true feelings of your heart. To 'allow' was to admit or acknowledge, whence 'allowance' here. Cp. *Othello*, II. i. 48-9: 'his pilot Of very expert and approv'd allowance' (i.e. allowed or acknowledged to be very expert).

59. *take in.* Cp. I. ii. 24.

64. *I am in this,* I am involved in this, I am one of those friends at stake in this affair.

66. *our general louts,* the loutish public. So, in *Hamlet*, 'the general' for the public (II. ii. 466), 'the general ear' for the public ear (II. ii. 597), &c.

68. *inheritance,* possession: the regular meaning.

loves. For the plural, cp. II. i. 34 n.

69. *Of what that want might ruin,* of all that the want of that possession, the want of their affections, might ruin (viz. your fortunes and your friends).

71. *Not, not only.* So III. iii. 95. The sense is: In this way you may not only heal the immediate danger (and save your life) but recover what is lost (and be Consul after all).

74. *here be with them,* go thus far with them. She suits the action to the word.

bussing, kissing. She takes it like a great dame. This homely language is her way of shrugging at the whole vulgar necessity. She

and her son were so much alike that she knew her tone would please him.

77. *waving thy head*. She chooses 'waving' rather than 'bowing', because it is more off-hand. To be off-hand about the business is her way of making it palatable to Coriolanus.

78-80. *Which often, thus, &c.* 'Which' refers to 'head'. She droops her head by way of example ('thus'): like a ripe mulberry just dropping from the tree. Mulberries were proverbial for softness. It was pointed out by the classical Musgrave that in one of the *Fragments* of Aeschylus Hector is described as a man 'softer than mulberries'.

78. *stout*, proud, stiff. Cp. l. 127.

83. *as they*, as for them. Cp. l. 125.

85. *theirs*, to their pattern, to their taste.

88-9. *For they have pardons, &c.* Only ask them, and you will find them as ready to forgive as they are ready to talk nonsense.

91. *a fiery gulf*, a whirlpool of fire.

92. *bower*, chamber: particularly, a lady's chamber. I have not, says Othello, 'those soft parts of conversation That chamberers have' (III. iii. 264-5). Coriolanus, like Othello, was a warrior and no 'chamberer'.

99. *unbarb'd sconce*, unarmoured head (i.e. unprotected, bare). A war-horse was said to be 'barbed' when it was fitted with 'barbes', which were armoured coverings for the breast and flanks. 'Barbe' is a corruption of 'barde' (Fr. *barde*).

102. *this single plot*, this single six foot of earth, this single body of mine. See next note.

103. *This mould of Marcius*, this mould of earth called Marcius. See last note, and cp. *Richard II*, III. ii. 153-4: 'That small model of the barren earth Which serves as paste and cover to our bones.'

105. *such . . . which*: a mixture of 'such a part as' and 'a part which'.

105-10. All three use the language of the stage: 'part,' 'discharge,' 'prompt,' 'perform.'

113. *quired*, sang in concert.

114. *eunuch*, i.e. eunuch's.

116. *Tent*, encamp. We have passed from the language of the stage to the language of the camp.

119. *Who might be used of anything possessing animation*: e.g. 'Your eye who' (*Tempest*, II. i. 133), 'lips who . . . still blush' (*Romeo and Juliet*, III. iii. 38), 'hairs who wave' (*Venus and Adonis*, 306). &c.

121. *surcease*, cease.

123. *inherent baseness*, i.e. one which I shall never get rid of.

124. *my more dishonour*, more dishonour to me.

125. *Than thou of them*. Cp. l. 83.

125-7. *let Thy mother . . . stoutness*. 'Let me rather feel the utmost extremity that thy pride can bring upon us, than live thus in fear of thy dangerous obstinacy' (Johnson). Rather than sit waiting for the worst she would have it over, ruin and all. For 'stoutness', cp. l. 78.

130. *owe*, own, possess.

132. *mountebank their loves*, win their loves like a mountebank. play the arts of the cheapjack upon them.

133. *Cog*, cheat, trick: a dicing term.

138. *attend*, await.

142. *The word*, the watchword.

ACT III, SCENE III. 1. *charge him home*, press the charge home. Cp. II. ii. 108, IV. ii. 48.

affects, aims at.

*2. *Tyrannical power*. For the charge, cp. I. 64 below, and IV. vi. 32. See also Plutarch's account, p. 151, and 152-3.

3. *Enforce him with*, press him with. Cp. II. iii. 227.

envy, malice, ill-will: the usual meaning in Shakespeare. Cp. I. 93.

*4-5. *the spoil got on the Antiates*, &c. This was an unfair charge. See Plutarch's account of it, p. 153.

10. *by the poll*, by the head, individually.

*11. *by tribes*. The citizens of Rome were divided into political divisions, called Tribes. This business of voting 'by the poll' and 'by tribes' was a ruse of the Tribunes. See North's *Plutarch*, p. 153.

12. *presently*, instantly. Cp. I. 21.

18. *power & the truth o' the cause*. I suppose this may mean 'the power which they have in the justice of their cause'. It sounds like the jargon of an overworked politician.

19. *when such time*, when such time as, when the time comes that.

26-7. *his worth Of contradiction*, his full quota or proportion of contradiction, his full 'pennyworth' of the pleasure of contradicting. This is Malone's explanation, and the best.

29-30. *that is there which looks With us to break his neck*, there is that there which looks likely, as we shall play upon it, to break his neck.

32. *as an ostler*. As Neil Blane says in *Old Mortality* (chap. 3): "Folk in the hostler line maun put up wi' muckle." (Aldis Wright).

piece, of money.

33. *bear the knave by the volume*, will stand being called 'knave' often enough to fill a volume.

41. *this present*, this present occasion.

42. *determine*, end.

demand, ask. Cp. III. ii. 45 ('demand'), II. ii. 161 ('require').

44. *Allow*, acknowledge.

54. *rougher* means 'rougher than perhaps they should be'. Cp. III. i. 3 ('swifter').

56. *envy*, mean ill-will to. Cp. I. 3 above.

62. *contriv'd*, plotted: the regular meaning in Shakespeare.

63. *all season'd office*, all office season'd by time and usage, all the traditional offices which time has made familiar to us.

67. *the lowest hell*. Aldis Wright quotes *Deuteronomy*, xxxii. 22: 'For a fire is kindled in mine anger, and shall burn unto the lowest hell.'

68. *injurious*, insulting, insolent. 'Injury' was often used in the sense of 'insult', like the Latin *iniuria*.

69-70. *sat . . . clutch'd*, i. e. sat there . . . were there clutched.

78. *Opposing laws with strokes* is only another way of saying 'beating your officers' (l. 77). Cp. ll. 95-7.

80. *in such capital kind*, i. e. so capital a crime.

83. *You!* Brutus was better at talking than soldiering. 'The tribunes,' says Autidius (iv. vii. 31), 'are no soldiers.' In any case his post was a home-keeping one. It did not permit him to leave Rome.

93. *Envied against*. Cp. ll. 3, 57, above.

95-7. *Given hostile strokes*, &c. See III. i. 22-8.

95. *not*, not only. Cp. III. ii. 71.

100. *precipitation*. Sound as six syllables.

102. *Rome gates*. Cp. I. viii. 9, II. i. 182.

104-5. See Sicinius' instructions in ll. 12-18 above, and admire the docility of the people. They are equally exemplary throughout the scene (ll. 117, 135, 140).

112. *estimate*, worth. Johnson gives the sense: 'I love my country beyond the rate at which I value my dear wife.'

118. *cry*, pack: a regular term. Cp. iv. vi. 149. So Hamlet talks jeeringly of 'a cry of players', meaning a company of them (III. ii. 293).

121. *I banish you*. 'You' is emphatic. For the retort cp. *Richard II*, I. iii. 279-80 (Gaunt to Bolingbroke): 'Think not the king did banish thee But thou the king.'

125. *Fan you into despair*. He means, into the chill of despair. Cp. *Macbeth*, I. ii. 50-1: 'Where the Norweyan banners flout the sky And fan our people cold.'

127. *which finds not, till it feels*, which can discern no consequences till it feels them.

128. *Making but reservation of yourselves*, i. e. leaving none in the city but yourselves (Johnson). Most editors change 'but' to 'not', thinking that this agrees better with what follows: 'Still your own foes.' The effect of the change is to spoil both lines.

For the point is not that they do not spare even themselves, but that they do spare themselves and no others, and being left to themselves, fall a prey to the first attack. Here is the whole force of 'Still your own foes', that they are so without knowing it. They think in their ignorance (l. 127) that when they have saved themselves they have saved everything.

If 'not' be read all this is lost, and 'Still your own foes' becomes superfluous. If they do not spare even themselves, it is idle repetition to add that they are their own foes.

130. *Abated*, humbled, dejected (Fr. *abattre*, to beat down).

nation: to be sounded as three syllables.

ACT IV, SCENE I. 1-2. *the beast With many heads*. Cp. II. iii. 17.

7-9. *fortune's blows . . . cunning*. The construction of the sentence (it has no grammar) is this: when fortune's blows are most struck home, to be gentle under one's wounds craves a noble cunning. 'Craves,' therefore, is rightly singular. Its subject is not 'blows' but 'being gentle wounded', i. e. gentleness under one's wounds.

8. *most struck home*, i. e. hardest. Cp. I. iv. 38, &c.

8-9. *craves A noble cunning*, demands a certain noble philosophy. 'Cunning' means skill, wisdom, art, craft (OE. *cunnan*, to know).

The word has deteriorated, but we still speak of an artist's cunning.

11. *conn'd them, got them up.*

13. *the red pestilence.* There was a red, and a black, and a yellow pestilence, about which we know very little. The red was Shakespeare's favourite for maledictions. 'The red plague rid you,' says Caliban to Prospero (*Tempest*, i. ii. 364).

14. *occupations, handicrafts.* See further, iv. vi. 98 n.

18. *Six of his labours.* Everybody has heard of the Twelve Labours of Hercules.

23. *sometime, former, late.*

26. *fond, foolish.*

27. *wot, know*: an old-fashioned form, preserved as a present tense along with the past tense 'wist', which is much used in our Bible. Both are from OE. *witan*, to know.

28. *still, constantly.*

30. *dragon . . . fen.* The dragon who lives in the fen is a well-known character in the old stories of Europe.

32. *or . . . or, either . . . or.*

33. *Cautelous, crafty, deceitful.* In *Hamlet*, i. iii. 15, we have the noun 'cautel' = deceit.

practice, stratagem. This bad sense of 'practice', as something crafty and underhand, is common in Shakespeare, and was the earliest sense of the word. We still speak of 'sharp practice'.

My first son. 'First' seems to mean 'first and only'. Cp. v. iii. 162.

36. *exposure, exposure:* a coinage of Shakespeare, like 'composture' in *Timon of Athens*, iv. iii. 447. Elsewhere he uses 'exposure' twice.

41. *repeal, recall.* Cp. *Julius Caesar*, iii. i. 37: 'the repealing of my banish'd brother.'

43. *the needer, the man who needs it, who should profit by it.*

49. *of noble touch, of tried nobility, who have been tested and found noble.* The metaphor is from the testing of gold on the touchstone.

ACT IV, SCENE II. 11. *The hoarded plague o' the gods.* As if they saved up a special store for special occasions. Cp. *Richard III.*, i. iii. 217 (Queen Margaret's wish upon Gloucester): 'If heaven have any grievous plague in store, . . . O! let them keep it till thy sins be ripe, And then hurl down their indignation.'

14. *Will you be gone?* She hesitates between keeping him and ordering him out of her sight. Cp. ll. 22-3.

16. *Are you mankind?* Are you a man instead of a woman? asks Sicinius, meaning 'What a virago have we here!' Cp. Fletcher's *Woman Hater*, iii. i.: 'Are women grown so mankind, must they be wooing' (quoted by Wright).

18. *Was not a man my father?* Volumnia takes 'mankind' in its ordinary sense of human creature.

Hadst thou foxship, &c. Hadst thou, fool as thou art, ungrateful cunning enough, &c. The fox was the symbol of cunning and ingratitude.

24. *in Arabia, i. e. in the desert, where no one could come between them.* Cp. *Macbeth*, iii. iv. 104: 'dare me to the desert with thy sword'; and *Richard II.*, iv. i. 74: 'I dare meet Surrey in a wilderness.'

24. *thy tribe*, your whole pack. Cp. v. v. 130.

32. *The noble knot he made* is the roll of noble services which he had done to Rome and which bound Rome to him.

44. *With*, by.

48. *told them home*: as we should say, 'given it them home.'

52. *puling*, whining, whimpering. She addresses Virgilia.

53. *Juno-like*. The stateliness of Juno's anger was proverbial. She was queen of the gods.

ACT IV, SCENE III. 10. *your favour is well approved by your tongue*, your appearance is confirmed by your speech. He had a Roman accent. The original reads, not 'approved', but 'appeared'. This might mean 'is made apparent, is manifested'. But there is no other example of such a use, and anyhow it makes poor sense.

23. *in a ripe aptness*, i.e. ripe and ready.

32. *them*, the Volsces.

40. *He cannot choose*, he cannot choose but do so, he cannot help making a fine appearance.

48-9. *their charges*, the troops under their charge. For 'centurions', see I. vii. 3 n.

distinctly billeted, billeted out in their distinct or separate companies.

already in the entertainment, i.e. 'though not actually encamped, yet already in pay' (Johnson). To be in any one's 'entertainment' was to be his hired servant. Similarly, to 'entertain' any one was to take him into your service.

ACT IV, SCENE IV. *S.D. In Scenes iv and v we come back again to Plutarch. See pp. 154-5.

6. *Save you, sir*, i.e. God save you: a common greeting. The right reply was 'And you', i.e. And God save you.

8. *lies*. Cp. I. ix. 82.

17. *of a doit*, i.e. about the merest trifle. A doit was worth half a farthing. Cp. I. v. 6.

21. *trick*, toy, trifle.

22. *interjoin their issues*, interjoin their destinies, throw in their lot with each other, join fortunes.

24. *This enemy town*. The noun, 'enemy,' is much more forcible here than a regular adjective would have been. We have 'his enemy king' in *Lear*, v. iii. 222.

25. *give me way*, give way to me, yield to my request.

ACT IV, SCENE V. 1. *service*, attendance.

14. *companions*, fellows: a word of contempt. Cp. v. ii. 64, and *Julius Caesar*, iv. iii. 137-8: 'What should the wars do with these jiggling fools? Companion, hence!'

19. *anon*, presently.

25. *avoid*, clear out of. Cp. I. 34. To-day it means 'keep clear of'. The same root idea is in both (Fr. *vider*, empty, clear out).

35. *avoid*, clear out! See previous note.

35-6. *batten on cold bits*, gorge yourself on master's leavings.

41. *the canopy* is 'this most excellent canopy, the air, this brave o'erhanging firmament' (*Hamlet*, II. ii. 318-19).

47. *daws*, jackdaws. He means, you're a chattering fellow.

*60-107. This speech of Plutarch follows very closely the speech in North's *Plutarch*. See pp. 154-5.

75. *extreme*: accent 'éxtreme'.

77. *memory*, memorial. Cp. v. i. 17. 80. *envy*. Cp. III. iii. 3 n.

84. *Hoop'd* is the same word as 'whooped'.

88. 'voided', avoided.

89. *quit of*, quits with.

91. *wreak*, vengeance. To be 'wreaked' on a person was to be revenged on him.

92-3. *moims Of shame*, shameful hurts, shameful damages and devastations.

98. *under fiends*, nether fiends, fiends of the nether world.

99. *prove*, try: the original sense.

*107-53. This speech of Aufidius is as remarkable for its amplification of Plutarch as the speech of Coriolanus for its fidelity. See p. 155.

110. *yond* and 'yon' were used indifferently.

divine: accent 'divine'.

114. *My grained ash*, my tough ash lance. 'Grained' means close-grained, which is the merit of a good shaft.

115. *clip*, embrace. So I. vi. 29.

116. *The anvil of my sword*, thee on whom my sword has so often hammered blows.

122. *rapt*, enraptured.

124. *Bstride my threshold*. By Roman custom a bride was lifted over the threshold of her husband's house on her first entrance.

125. *power*. Cf. I. ii. 9.

126. *target*, targe or small shield. *thy brawn*, i.e. thy brawny arm.

127. *out*, outright.

137. *o'er-bear*, o'er-bear all barriers. This is Shakespeare's regular word for the action of a flood. We had it in III. i. 248. We have it again in IV. vi. 79. The old copies read 'o'er-beat', which is possible but unlikely.

142. *most absolute sir*. Coriolanus seems to him 'the complete man'. This is the meaning of 'absolute': perfectly finished and complete.

149. *ere destroy*. For the omission of the subject ('we'), cp. I. i. 225, 249.

153. *Yet, Marcius, that was much*. He cannot help reflecting how very great after all had been their enmity.

158. *my mind gave me*, i.e. told me; I had a misgiving.

172. *wot*, know. Cp. IV. i. 27.

174. *it's no matter for that*, never mind about that; no particulars. They are trying each other, and don't speak out till excited *Third Servingman* breaks the ice (l. 188).

197. *directly*, plainly, obviously.

198. *troth* and 'truth' are the same word.

scotched, cut, scored, slashed; as a cook slashes a steak for broiling. Cp. *Macbeth*, III. ii. 13: 'We have scotch'd the snake, not kill'd it.' To 'scotch and notch' was a phrase of the time. The word is still in dialect use.

199. *a carbonado* is a piece of meat cut in this way for broiling on the coals (Span. *carbonada*, from *carbon*, coal). The cutting was important enough to give the word a second meaning. Cp. Cotgrave's contemporary *French-English Dict.*: '*Carbonare*: f. A Carbonadoe, a rasher on the coales; also, a slash over the face, which fetcheth the flesh with it.'

204. *so made on*, made so much of.

208. *sanctifies himself with 's hand*: 'considers the touch of his hand as holy; clasps it with the same reverence as a lover would clasp the hand of his mistress' (Malone).

214. *Sowle*, pull, drag, lug (by the ears). The word is still widely current in dialect in this sense.

Rome gates. Cp. III. iii. 102.

215. *poll'd*, clipped, cropt, bare. To 'poll' is to clip the hair (of the 'poll' or head).

222. *directitude*. Third Servingman aims at a big word and comes by a fall. It is useless to speculate what word it was he aimed at.

226. *in blood*. See I. i. 165 n.

227. *conies*, rabbits.

230. *presently*, instantly.

232. *parcel*, portion. So I. ii. 32.

239. *spritely, waking* is Pope's emendation of the original 'sprightly walking'. That 'waking' is an emendation scarcely affects the argument in the following note.

240. *full of vent* is literally full of emission or discharge; i. e. bursting with life (like strong wine), bubbling over, effervescent: opposed to 'mulled' in the next line. Cp. I. ii. 5: 'vent our musty superfluity.' This explanation is a modification of that given by the Globe editors.

The explanation now in favour is that 'vent' is a hunting term. A hound was said to 'vent' the game when he smelt him in the wind. War would then be likened to a pack of hounds in full cry; 'audible' would express their cry; and 'full of vent' would mean 'full of the spirit of the chase'.

This is attractive but far-fetched. It is obtained by (1) singling out for over-emphasis one term of the four, and (2) entirely neglecting the antithesis in the four terms that follow in l. 241. The antithesis is strict and unmistakable: 'insensible')('spritely,' 'sleepy')('waking,' 'deaf')('audible,' 'mulled')('full of vent'. The hunting men who proposed the explanation may be pardoned their over-emphasis, but not their neglect of the whole structure of the passage. If 'mulled' corresponds to 'full of vent', as it must, then 'full of vent' can have nothing to do with hunting.

241. *mulled* means, as Hammer says, 'softened and dispirited, as wine is when it is burnt and sweetened [i. e. when it is mulled].'

ACT IV, SCENE VI. 2. *His remedies are tame*, any means of redress he may take have lost their sting.

5. *rather had*, had rather.

7. *pestering*, crowding, infesting.

20. *Good den*. Cp. II. i. 105.

29. *confusion*. Cp. III. i. 109 n., 189.

32. *affecting one sole throne*, *Without assistance*, aiming at a despotism with himself for sole despot. This charge was made in III. iii. 62-5.

50. *record*: accent 'recórd'.

52. *reason*, converse, talk: a common use (Fr. *raisonner*). Cp. *Merchant of Venice*, II. viii. 27: 'I reason'd with a Frenchman yesterday. Who told me.'

64. *deliver'd*, reported.

68-9. *as spacious as between*, &c., so wide as to take in everything between the youngest and oldest.

71. *Good Marcius*. Brutus begins to hedge already: 'good' Marcius!

73. *atone*, be reconciled, agree (lit., be made *at one*, whence 'atone'). Cp. *As You Like It*, V. iv. 115-17: 'Then is there mirth in heaven When earthly things made even Atone together.'

79. *O'erborne*: like a flood. Cp. IV. V. 137 n.

82. *help*. Cp. III. i. 275.

86. *cement*: accent 'cément'.

87-8. *Your franchises*, &c., your liberties and privileges, on which you insisted so mightily, reduced to a mere nothing.

confin'd Into an auger's bore, i.e. so reduced that the minutest bit of space will hold them. Cp. *Macbeth*, II. iii. 129-30 in 'Here where our fate, hid in an auger-hole, May rush and seize us' (i.e. in a place so riddled with treachery that we cannot tell from what tiny invisible hiding-place our fate may rush upon us).

97. *your apron-men*, your mechanics. Cp. *Antony and Cleopatra*, V. ii. 208-9: 'Mechanic slaves With greasy aprons, rules and hammers.'

98. *the voice of occupation*, the vote of the working man. 'Occupation' meant trade, handicraft. Cp. IV. i. 14, and *Julius Caesar*, I. ii. 269: 'An I had been a man of any occupation,' i.e. a working man, one of the crowd.

100-1. *As Hercules*, &c. As Hercules dared the dragon and carried off the golden apples of the Hesperides. This was one of his Twelve Labours, of which we heard in IV. i. 17-19.

106. *constant fools*, i.e. fools for their constancy.

113-15. *they charg'd him . . . and therein show'd like enemies*, they would charge him, they would be charging him . . . and would in so doing appear like enemies. For this indicative form of the subjunctive, cp. II. ii. 18.

118-19. *You have made fair hands, You and your crafts!* He plays on 'handicraft' (hand, craft). You have made a nice job of it, you and your handicraftsmen!

123. *clusters*, swarms: of the mob. So again, I. 129.

125. *roar him in again*, receive him in again with roars for mercy.

126. *The second name of men*, the second name among men, second only to Coriolanus in renown.

his points, his signals, his directions. A 'point of war' was a signal on a trumpet, as Shakespeare knew (2 *Hen. IV*, I. i. 52). Perhaps this suggested 'points' to him.

135. *a whip*, to lash us with. Cp. I. viii. 13.

coxcombs, crowns, heads.

149. *you and your cry!* See III. iii. 118.

Shall's: colloquial for 'shall we'. Menenius was fond of these homely turns. Cp. I. i. 132.

ACT IV, SCENE VII. *S.D. *Enter Aufidius*. The growth of Aufidius's jealousy is described also by Plutarch. See p. 156.

5. *darken'd*, thrown into the shade. Cp. II. i. 278.

6. *Even by your own*, even by your own men.

8. *More proudlier*: the familiar double comparative, for emphasis.

13. *for your particular*, for your own particular interest.

*18. *come to his account*, i.e. come 'to render up account to the Volscies of his charge and government' (North's *Plutarch*: see p. 159). So again l. 26.

21. *fairly*, i.e. honestly and loyally to the Volscians.

22. *husbandry*, management.

dragon-like. Shakespeare's Richard III, before his last battle, prays St. George to inspire his army 'with the spleen of fiery dragons' (*Richard III*, v. iii. 351).

28. *sits down*, i.e. to besiege them.

the repeal, the recalling of him. Cp. IV. i. 41.

*29-30. *the nobility . . . The senators and patricians . . . too*. Why this distinction, it is often asked, between the nobility on the one hand and the senators and patricians on the other? They were clearly one group. The reason, I imagine, is in North's *Plutarch*, in such a sentence as this: 'For they did ground this second insurrection against the Nobility and Patricians, &c.' (see p. 147, last line). Shakespeare may have thought that they were in some way distinct.

33-5. It was believed that the osprey, or fishing-hawk, had only to eye a fish to make it turn over and give itself up to be eaten. It fascinated the fish by mere superiority of nature. Rome, says Aufidius, will no more be able to resist Coriolanus than the fish the osprey.

37. *even*, without losing his balance.

38-9. *Which out of daily fortune*, &c., which always affects the fortunate man, accustomed as he is to a daily round of success.

40. *disposing*, turning to advantage.

41-5. *whether nature*, &c., whether the cause was a 'stubborn uniformity of nature, which could not make the proper transition from the *casque* or *helmet* to the *cushion* or *chair of civil authority*, but acted with the same despotism in peace as in war' (Johnson).

41. *nature*, the nature of the man.

43. *the cushion*. See III. i. 100.

44. *austerity and garb*, austerity of manner. For the form of the expression see note on I. viii. 4. For 'garb' = manner, cp. *Hamlet*, II. ii. 399: 'Let me comply with you in this garb.'

45. *but one of these*. The connexion is: which of the three was the cause I will not be bold to say, but one of these three, &c.

46-7. He has a spice of them all, he says: not all outright: I free him of that.

48-9. *but he has a merit*, &c. (One of these faults brought about his fall), but he has a counterbalancing merit in him such as should choke the mention of his faults even in the utterance.

49-50. *So our virtues . . . the time*. This shows, he says, how our virtues lie in the interpretation of the age we live in, how much our reputation is in the hands of our contemporaries. In another age or other circumstances Coriolanus might have been as much honoured for his virtues as he had just been dishonoured for his faults. 'The time' is Shakespeare's regular word for 'the present time', 'the age'.

51-3. *And power . . . what it hath done.* The meaning is, that power, which is naturally most pleasing to itself, is never so obviously near its grave as when (speech succeeding to action) the time comes to pronounce a laudation of its achievements. 'Chair' means a chair of state, from which official pronouncements are made.

Most editors that I have seen go wrong on this passage. They have a picture of self-satisfied 'power' openly extolling itself, and are naturally puzzled to see how this can apply to Coriolanus, who notoriously hated brag. But 'unto itself most commendable' does not mean that power is self-satisfied; it means that power always seems more satisfactory to the person who possesses it than to those who don't. And it is nowhere said that power extols 'itself'.

The passage must be taken in connexion with what goes before, or the sense is lost. Aufidius has just said that no matter what your merits and achievements may be, everything depends on how your contemporaries take them (49-50). He goes on to add that there is nothing more risky for a man who has done great things than when the time comes to have them proclaimed (51-3). People may take such praise either way. If they take it one way, he's a hero and the saviour of the state; if they take it the other, he's a traitor and a tyrant. The application to Coriolanus is plain.

54-7. *One fire drives out one fire, &c.* These general reflections close, according to Shakespeare's habit, in a proverbial couplet. All the proverbs convey one meaning: that power falls by stirring up inevitably another power to oppose it (54-5). So Coriolanus has fallen once, at the height of his achievement, by the opposition of the people; so he will fall again, at the height of his new achievement, by the opposition of Aufidius (56-7).

ACT V, SCENE I. *s.d. *Rome. A Public Place.* The state of things in Rome from this point up to the mission of the women is vividly described by Plutarch. Of this part Shakespeare, by his plan, could make no detailed use.

2. *Which* was used indifferently in all three genders.

sometime. Cp. I. ix. 82.

3. *In a most dear particular*, with a warm personal affection. No doubt 'general' suggested 'particular'. Cominius was not only his general, but a particular friend as well.

5. *knee.* Shakespeare loved to make these noun-verbs. They hit the mind. Cp. I. 28 ('nose'), and v. iii. 48 ('virgin'd').

6. *coy'd*, disdained. 'Coy' had a stronger meaning then than now: 'disdainful,' 'scornful.'

8. *would not seem to*, pretended not to.

16. *rack'd*, strained and striven their utmost.

17. *To make coals cheap*: as they certainly would be when Rome was burning!

a noble memory! Cp. iv. v. 77. A noble memorial to leave behind you, he says: that 'they lowered the price of coals!'

19. *When it was less expected*, i.e. the less it was expected.

20. *bare*, mere.

23. *offer'd*, tried. Cp. II. ii. 71 n.

28. *nose the offence*, smell the offending matter. Cp. I. 5 n.

47. *that thanks*, &c., that thanks proportionate to your good intentions.

51. *not taken well*, taken at a bad moment.

58. *Till he be dieted to my request*, till feeding put him in the vein to listen to me.

61. *prove*, try.

*64. *he does sit in gold*, he sits like a god thron'd in gold. Cp. v. iv. 24-7. The first idea is from Plutarch: 'he was set in his chair of state, with a marvellous and unspeakable majesty' (see p. 156). The figure of 'gold' is illustrated by Steevens from Pope's *Iliad* (viii. 442): 'Th' eternal Thunderer sat thron'd in gold'; and from *Henry VIII.*, i. i. 19: 'All clinkant, all in gold, like heathen gods.'

65-6. *his injury The gaoler to his pity*, the sense of his wrongs has locked the door on his pity.

69-70. *what he would not*, &c., what he would not do he bound with an oath that we must yield to his conditions. Cominius had come as an ambassador from Rome to plead for terms. Coriolanus refused to treat with him. The conditions he offered ('what he would do') were final; to discuss them was useless; they should be sent after in writing. Cominius's proposals ('what he would not') he refused, and clinched his refusal with an oath that we must yield to his conditions. It was to be his conditions or nothing.

72. *Unless*, except, but for.

ACT V, SCENE II. 10. *lots to blanks*, prizes to blanks; as Steevens says, quoting *Richard III.*, 'all the world to nothing.'

14. *lover*, dear friend. So regularly in Shakespeare. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, III. ii. 14: 'Romans, countrymen, and lovers!'

17. *glorified* is a passable substitute for the original 'verified', which satisfies nobody, but which some take to mean 'supported the credit of'.

20. *subtle*, deceptively smooth, 'tricky.'

21. *tumbled past the throw*, overshot myself.

22. *stamp'd the leasing*, stamped the falsehood, and made it pass current for truth.

30. *factionary*, i. e. an active partisan.

54. *Sirrah*: an ordinary form of address to inferiors: used also in reproof, as in l. 75 below.

64. *companion*. Cp. IV. v. 14.

66. *a Jack guardant*, a Jack on guard, a rascally interfering sentry. 'Jack' was a common term for a paltry impudent fellow. It survives in cards, where Jack and knave are the same thing.

office me. He thinks of him as a 'Jack in office'. The one 'Jack' suggested the other.

67. *entertainment*, reception.

72. *swound*, swoon.

77. *here's water*. He weeps.

hardly moved, with difficulty persuaded.

88-9. *My affairs Are servanted to others*, i. e. in these matters I am not my own master.

89-90. *Though I owe*, &c., though my revenge is my own private property, the power to remit it lies with the Volscians. For 'owe' = possess, cp. III. ii. 130. 'Properly' means 'as my own proper possession.'

91-3. *That we have been familiar*, &c., as for our old familiarity,

I had rather see it ungratefully forgotten and destroyed than that I should dwell with pity on what it once was.

100. *constant*, resolute. Cp. i. i. 245.

105. *shent*, scolded (OE. *scendan*, to disgrace).

111. *by himself*, by his own hand.

ACT V. SCENE III. 3. *plainly*, i.e. openly and above-board.

4. *borne the business*. Cp. iv. vii. 21 (Aufidius on Coriolanus): 'he bears all things fairly.'

11. *godded me*, made a god of me.

30. *Olympus*, a mountain in Thessaly, regarded by the Greeks as the seat of the gods and as the highest peak of the world.

14. *The first conditions*: those communicated to Cominius (v. i. 69, 70).

*21 S.D. *Enter, in mourning habits, Virgilia, Volturnia, &c.* In this scene Shakespeare has followed his original, North's *Plutarch*, more closely than anywhere else in the play. See pp. 157-8.

32. *aspect*: accent 'aspéct'. So always in Shakespeare.

38-40. *These eyes . . . makes you think so*. She has addressed him as her husband, as if things were still the same. He replies that he sees everything differently now. She takes this her own way, and answers that it is their altered appearance that makes him think so.

41. *out*, i.e. out of my part, don't know what to say next.

46. *the jealous queen of heaven* is Juno, the goddess of marriage, and the jealous guardian of marriage vows.

48. *virgin'd it*, kept it virgin. Cp. v. i. 5 n.

55-6. *as mistaken all this while, &c.* She ironically suggests that the world has been 'all this while' mistaken in thinking that the duty is from children to parents. Clearly it should be from parents to children; and at that word she kneels to her son.

57. *your corrected son!* See last note. The correction cuts him like a whip.

58. *hungry*, sterile, barren. 'Every writer on husbandry speaks of hungry soil, and hungry gravel, and what is more barren than the sands on the sea-shore?' (Steevens).

59. *Fillip*, flick. To 'fillip' a thing is strictly to flick it with a jerk of the finger from the thumb.

61. *Murd'ring impossibility*, killing, by such wild action, all impossibility, so that, impossibility being dead, anything becomes easy.

63. *holp*. Cp. III. i. 275.

*64. *The noble sister of Publicola*. 'Valeria, Publicola's own sister; the self-same Publicola, who did such notable service to the Romans, both in peace and wars, and was dead also certain years before, as we have declared in his life' (North's *Plutarch*).

65. *The moon of Rome*. The moon has always been the type of chastity. Cp. I. i. 263 ('the modest moon'), and especially II. i. 109. Diana, the ancient goddess of virginity, was its queen. So 'Diana's temple' (l. 67).

66. *curdied*, curded. It was brutal of the early editors to change it to 'curdled'.

68-70. 'An epitome of you, which, enlarged by the commentaries of time, may equal you in magnitude' (Johnson).

70. *The god of soldiers*, Mars.
74. *sea-mark*: a landmark for men at sea.
flaw, gust, blast.
75. *sirrah*. Cp. l. 54 n.
76. *That 's my brave boy!* Young Marcius kneels as he is bid.
80. *forsworn to grant*, sworn not to grant.
81. *denials*, refusals.
82. *capitulate*, draw up terms. Now used only of the conquered party submitting to terms drawn up for them.
95. *bewray*, reveal. 96. *exile*: accent 'exile'.
103. *poor we* is not such good grammar as 'poor us', but it is certainly a much more convincing expression.
104. *capital*, deadly. 112. *evident*, unmistakable.
114. *recreant*, traitor, turncoat.
120. *determine*, come to an end. Cp. III. iii. 42.
121. *both parts*, both sides, Romans and Volscians.
- 129-30. Nothing could show more delicately the softening of Coriolanus than that he of all men should melt into rhyme.
139. *give the all-hail to thee*: as if he were a king. Cp. *Macbeth*, I. v. 55-6: 'Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor! Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!' (i.e. by the acclamation which will one day hail you king).
149. *the fine strains of honour*, the finer impulses, the higher reaches of honour.
151. *To tear with thunder*, &c. Nothing less than Jupiter the Thunderer would serve him for a model.
- The wide cheeks o' the air*: a favourite image. We have 'the cloudy cheeks of heaven' in *Richard II*, III. iii. 57, and 'the welkin's cheek' in *The Tempest*, I. ii. 4.
152. *And yet*, &c., and yet to temper your thundering with moderation and mercy. If the Gods are his models, he should imitate their mercy as well as their might.
160. *Like one i' the stocks*, whose vagabond grumbling nobody minds. The image has more life than Latinity.
162. *When*, while.
fond of no second brood, caring only for her first. Cp. IV. i. 33.
170. *'longs*, belongs.
176. *reason our petition*, i.e. argue for it.
178. *to his mother*, for his mother. Cp. the old phrase 'take to wife'.
189. *mortal*, mortally. The adverbial termination of 'dangerously' does for both.
190. *make true wars*. Cp. I. iii. 112: 'make it brief wars.'
191. *convenient*, suitable, satisfactory. 194. *withal*, therewith.
202. *a former fortune*, a fortune like what I formerly had.
- 204-5. *which we*, &c., which we would have drawn up on like conditions and counter-sealed. The 'better witness' is a copy of the treaty. 'On like conditions' means that they must have a duplicate. One is for the Romans, the other for the Volscians.
- *207. *a temple*. According to Plutarch a temple was built: 'a temple of Fortune for the women,' or of *Fortuna muliebris*. See p. 159, where the general joy is described.

ACT V, SCENE IV. *good coign*, yonder corner (Fr. *coin*).

8-9. *stay upon*, stay on for, await.

13. *Your butterfly*. Cp. i. i. 134 n.

19. *than an eight-year-old horse* remembers its dam.

24. *his state*, his chair of state. A 'state' was a royal chair with a canopy over it. Originally it meant the canopy itself. Cp. v. i. 64 n.

24-5. *as a thing made for Alexander*, like a figure of Alexander the Great. 'Made for' = made to represent.

30. *in the character*, in the true character, as he is.

33. *'long of you*, along of you, owing to you. Another of Menenius's colloquialisms.

40. *plebeians*: accent 'plébeiains', as in i. ix. 7.

45. *are dislodg'd*, have broken up their camp.

47. *the expulsion of the Tarquins*. Cp. ii. ii. 93 n.

51. *the blown tide*, the swollen tide. The order of sense is blown = inflated = swollen. The same image, of the arch and the tide, occurs in his *Lucrece*, 1667-8, and we infer that an image so vivid and thus repeated was from life. The rush of the tide through the arches of old London Bridge was one of the sights.

52. s.d. *hautboys* were wooden double-reed instruments of high pitch (Fr. *hautbois*). In the old editions the word is spelt as it was pronounced, 'hoe-boy.'

53-4. *sackbuts*, *psalteries*, &c. All this has a Hebrew air. Aldis Wright thinks that Shakespeare had Daniel iii. 7 in his mind. The 'sackbut' was a kind of trombone; the 'psaltery' was a stringed instrument resembling the dulcimer; for the 'tabor' (Elizabethan enough) see i. vi. 25 n.

55. *Make the sun dance*. Cp. *Twelfth-Night*, II. iii. 61 (where Sir Toby proposes a song): 'But shall we make the welkin dance indeed?' The idea probably came from the old belief that the sun dances on Easter Day.

71. *Repeal*, recall. Cp. iv. i. 41.

ACT V, SCENE V. s.d. *Corioli*. Editors are divided whether to place this scene in Antium or Corioli. We should expect it to be Antium. Plutarch makes it Antium. But in l. 90 it is explicitly said to be Corioli.

On the other hand, ll. 50, 73, 80 all point to Antium. We hear in l. 50 that it was Aufidius's native town, which seems to have been Antium (i. vi. 59); in l. 73 that Coriolanus has come back to the place he started from, which was Antium; in l. 80 that peace had been made with honour to 'the Antiates'.

The solution seems to me to be this. Shakespeare meant the scene to be Antium, and wrote with Antium in his mind until he came to Aufidius's speech in l. 88. There he was carried away by the magnificent opportunity of placing 'Coriolanus in Corioli' (l. 90), and for the rest of the scene thought rather of Corioli than of Antium.

5. *Him*, he whom.

6. *ports*. Cp. i. vii. 1.

21-2. *pawn'd Mine honour for his truth*, pledged my honour for his loyalty.

27. *stoutness*. Cp. III. ii. 78, 127.

37. *Which he did end all his*, which he garnered as all his own. To 'end' a crop is to get it in. The word is still current in Shakespeare's county of Warwick.

40. *waged me with his countenance*, gave me the favour of his countenance for my wages; paid me with patronage.

44-5. *There was it; For which*, &c. This is the point on which I will attack him with my utmost abilities (Johnson).

46. *rheum*, tears (lit., moisture, especially of the eyes, ears, or nose).

50. *like a post*, like an ordinary messenger (bringing news from the war). Cp. *Twelfth-Night*, I. v. 305: 'I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse.'

54. *at your vantage*, when you see your opportunity.

57-9. *When he lies along*, &c. When he is dead and you have told them *your* version of his story, all his reasons for his conduct will be buried with him.

67-8. *answering us With our own charge*, paying us back with our own expenses, recompensing us with nothing but our costs. It was really not quite so bad as this. See I. 78 n.

*71. S.D. *Enter Coriolanus, with drums and colours*. Shakespeare's version of the end of Coriolanus differs a good deal from Plutarch's. Both should be read. See pp. 159-60.

78. *a full third part*, i.e. by a full third part. The spoil more than met the cost of the war by a full third.

96-7. *never admitting Counsel o' the war*, never consulting his fellow officers. This agrees with the egotism of his entering speech, I. 71 f., but not so well with his behaviour before Rome.

102. *No more* than a 'boy of tears'. More naturally it should mean 'No more of that'. It should then be given to the *First Lord*, as Tyrwhitt suggested.

107. *notion*, understanding; its only meaning in Shakespeare.

114. *'tis there*, 'tis there recorded.

118. *his blind fortune*, what he did by blind chance.

121. *presently*, instantly.

126-7. *folds in This orb o' the earth*, encompasses the globe.

128. *judicious*, judicial. 'Judicial' is never used by Shakespeare.

130. *his tribe*, him and all his pack. Cp. IV. ii. 24.

139. *owe you*, possess for you. For 'owe' = possess, cp. III. ii. 130.

141. *deliver Myself*, show myself forth.

145-6. 'This allusion is to a custom unknown, I believe, to the ancients, but observed in the publick funerals of English princes, at the conclusion of which a herald proclaims the style of the deceased' (Steevens).

146. *urn*, tomb.

His own, i.e. Coriolanus's.

155. *memory*, memorial, as in IV. v. 77, V. i. 17.

*156. S.D. *Exeunt, bearing the body*. For the sequel of the tragedy, the shames and regrets that fell upon the Volsces, see Plutarch's conclusion on p. 160.

SELECTIONS FROM NORTH'S PLUTARCH

THE LIFE OF CAIUS MARTIUS CORIOLANUS

MARTIUS' YOUTH AND DISPOSITIONS

Caius Martius, whose life we intend now to write, being left an orphan by his father, was brought up under his mother, a widow, who taught us by experience, that orphanage bringeth many discommodities to a child, but doth not hinder him to become an honest man, and to excel in virtue above the common sort : as they are meanly born wrongfully do complain that it is the occasion of their casting away, for that no man in their youth taketh any care of them to see them well brought up, and taught that were meet. This man also is a good proof to confirm some men's opinions, that a rare and excellent wit untaught doth bring forth many good and evil things together, like as a fat soil bringeth forth both herbs and weeds that lieth unmanured. For this Martius' natural wit and great heart did marvellously stir up his courage to do and attempt notable acts. But on the other side, for lack of education, he was so choleric and impatient, that he would yield to no living creature : which made him churlish, uncivil, and altogether unfit for any man's conversation. Yet men marvelling much at his constancy, that he was never overcome with pleasure, nor money, and how he would endure easily all manner of pains and travails : thereupon they well liked and commended his *stoutness*¹ and temperancy. But for all that, they could not be acquainted with him, as one citizen useth to be with another in the city : his behaviour was so unpleasant to them by reason of a certain insolent and stern manner he had, which, because it was too lordly, was disliked. And to say truly, the greatest benefit that learning bringeth men unto is this : that it teacheth men that be rude and rough of nature, by compass and rule of reason, to be civil and courteous, and to like better the mean state than the higher. . . .

But Martius being more inclined to the wars than any other gentleman of his time, began from his childhood to give himself to handle weapons, and daily did exercise himself therein. And outward he esteemed armour to no purpose, unless one were naturally armed within. Moreover he did so exercise his body to hardness and all kind of activity, that he was very swift in running, strong in wrestling, and mighty in gripping, so that no man could ever cast him. Inasmuch as those that would try masteries with him for strength and nimbleness, would say, when they were overcome, that all was by reason of his natural strength, and hardness of ward, that never yielded to any pain or toil he took upon him.

¹ Italics indicate words borrowed by Shakespeare.

MARTIUS' FIRST GOING TO THE WARS

The first time he went to the wars, being but a stripling, was when Tarquin surnamed the proud (that had been king of Rome, and was driven out for his pride, after many attempts made by sundry battles to come in again, wherein he was ever overcome) did come to Rome, with all the aid of the Latins, and many other people of Italy, even as it were to set up his whole rest upon a battle by them, who with a great and mighty army had undertaken to put him into his kingdom again, not so much to pleasure him, as to overthrow the power of the Romans, whose greatness they both feared and envied. In this battle, wherein were many hot and sharp encounters of either party, Martius valiantly fought *in the sight of the Dictator*: and a Roman soldier being thrown to the ground even hard by him, *Martius straight bestrid him*, and slew the enemy with his own hands that had before overthrown the Roman. Hereupon, after the battle was won, the Dictator did not forget so noble an act, and therefore first of all he *crowned Martius with a garland of oaken boughs*. For whosoever saveth the life of a Roman, it is a manner among them to honour him with such a garland.¹

HIS AFFECTION TO HIS MOTHER

The Romans having many wars and battles in those days, Coriolanus was at them all: and there was not a battle fought, from whence he returned not with some reward of honour. And as for other, the only respect that made them valiant was they hoped to have honour: but touching Martius, the only thing that made him to love honour was the joy he saw his mother did take of him. For he thought nothing made him so happy and honourable, as that his mother might hear everybody praise and commend him, that she might always see him return with a crown upon his head, and that she might still embrace him with tears running down her cheeks for joy.² But Martius thinking all due to his mother, that had been also due to his father if he had lived: did not only content himself to rejoice and honour her, but at her desire took a wife also, by whom he had two children, and yet never left his mother's house therefore.

SEDITION IN ROME BECAUSE OF USURERS

Now he being grown to great credit and authority in Rome for his valiantness, it fortun'd there grew sedition in the city, because the Senate did favour the rich against the people, who did complain of the sore oppression of usurers, of whom they borrowed money. For those that had little were yet spoiled of that little they had by their creditors, for lack of ability to pay the usury:³ who offered their goods to be sold to them that would give most. And such as had nothing left, their bodies were laid hold of, and they were made their bond men, notwithstanding all the wounds and cuts they shewed,

¹ Cp. II. ii. 92-106.² Cp. I. i. 38-40: III. ii. 107-8.³ Cp. I. i. 83-91.

which they had received in many battles, fighting for defence of their country and commonwealth: of the which, the last war they made was against the Sabines, wherein they fought upon the promise the rich men had made them, that from thenceforth they would entreat them more gently. But after that they had faithfully served in this last battle of all, where they overcame their enemies, seeing they were never a whit the better, nor more gently entreated, they fell then even to flat rebellion and mutiny, and to stir up dangerous tumults within the city.

MARTIUS AGAINST THE PEOPLE

The Romans' enemies, hearing of this rebellion, did straight enter the territories of Rome with a marvellous great power, spoiling and burning all as they came. Whereupon the Senate immediately made open proclamation by sound of trumpet, that all those that were of lawful age to carry weapon should come and enter their names into the muster-master's book, to go to the wars: but no man obeyed their commandment. Whereupon their chief magistrates, and many of the Senate, began to be of divers opinions among themselves. For some thought it was reason they should somewhat yield to the poor people's request, and that they should a little qualify the severity of the law. Other held hard against that opinion, and that was Martius for one. For he alleged, that the creditors losing their money they had lent was not the worst thing that was thereby: but that the *lenity* that was favoured was a beginning of disobedience, and that the proud attempt of the commonalty was to abolish law, and to *bring all to confusion*.¹ Therefore he said, if the Senate were wise, they should betimes prevent and quench this ill-favoured and worse meant beginning. The Senate met many days in consultation about it: but in the end they concluded nothing.

THE PEOPLE LEAVE THE CITY

The poor common people, seeing no redress, gathered themselves one day together, and one encouraging another, they all forsook the city, and encamped themselves upon a hill, called at this day the holy hill, alongst the river of Tiber, offering no creature any hurt or violence, or making any show of actual rebellion: saving that they cried as they went up and down, that the rich men had driven them out of the city, and that all Italy through they should find air, water, and ground to bury them in. Moreover, they said, to dwell at Rome was nothing else but to be slain, or hurt with continual wars and fighting for defence of the rich men's goods.

THE TALE OF MENENIUS AGRIPPA TO PACIFY THE PEOPLE

The Senate, being afraid of their departure, did send unto them certain of the pleasantest old men and the most acceptable to the people among them. Of those Menenius Agrippa was he who was sent

¹ Cp. III. i. 98. 109.

for chief man of the message from the Senate. He, after many good persuasions and gentle requests made to the people on behalf of the Senate, knit up his oration in the end with a notable tale, in this manner :

That on a time all the members of man's body did rebel against the belly, complaining of it, that it only remained in the midst of the body, without doing anything, neither did bear any labour to the maintenance of the rest : whereas all other parts and members did labour painfully, and were very careful to satisfy the appetites and desires of the body. And so the belly, all this notwithstanding, laughed at their folly, and said : 'It is true, I first receive all meats that nourish man's body : but afterwards I send it again to the nourishment of other parts of the same.' 'Even so' (quoth he), 'O you, my masters, and citizens of Rome : the reason is alike between the Senate and you. For matters being well digested, and their counsels thoroughly examined, touching the benefit of the commonwealth, the Senators are cause of the common commodity that cometh unto every one of you.'¹

These persuasions pacified the people, conditionally, that the Senate would grant there should be yearly chosen five magistrates, which they now call *Tribuni Plebis*, whose office should be to defend the poor people from violence and oppression. So Junius Brutus and Sicinius Vellutus were the first Tribunes of the people that were chosen, who had only been the causers and procurers of this sedition.² Hereupon, the city being grown again to good quiet and unity, the people immediately went to the wars, showing that they had a good will to do better than ever they did.

THE BESIEGING OF CORIOLI

In the country of the Volscs, against whom the Romans made war at that time, there was a principal city and of most fame, that was called Corioli, before the which the Consul Cominius did lay siege. Wherefore all the other Volscs fearing lest that city should be taken by assault, they came from all parts of the country to save it, intending to give the Romans battle before the city, and to give an onset on them in two several places. The Consul Cominius, understanding this, divided his army also in two parts, and taking the one part with himself, he marched towards them that were drawing to the city out of the country : and the other part of his army he left in the camp with Titus Lartius (one of the valiantest men the Romans had at that time) to resist those that would make any sally out of the city upon them. So the Coriolans, making small account of them that lay in camp before the city, made a sally out upon them, in the which at the first the Coriolans had the better, and drave the Romans back again *into the trenches* of their camp.³

But Martius being there at that time, running out of the camp with a few men with him, he slew the first enemies he met withal, and made the rest of them stay upon a sudden, crying out to the Romans that had turned their backs, and calling them again to fight with a loud

¹ Cp. I. i. 101-60.

² Cp. I. i. 221-3.

³ Cp. I. iv. 23, and stage direction after I. 29.

voice. For he was *even such another as Cato would have a soldier and a captain to be, not only terrible and fierce to lay about him, but to make the enemy afraid with the sound of his voice and grimness of his countenance.*¹ Then there flocked about him immediately a great number of Romans: whereat the enemies were so afraid, that they gave back presently. But Martius, not staying so, did chase and follow them to their own gates, that fled for life. And there perceiving that the Romans retired back, for the great number of darts and arrows which flew about their ears from the walls of the city, and that there was not one man amongst them that durst venture himself to follow the flying enemies into the city, for that it was full of men of war, very well armed and appointed: he did encourage his fellows with words and deeds, crying out to them, that *fortune had opened the gates of the city, more for the followers than the fliers.*² But all this notwithstanding, few had the hearts to follow him.

THE CITY OF CORIOLI TAKEN

Howbeit Martius, being in the throng among the enemies, thrust himself into the gates of the city, and entered the same among them that fled, without that any one of them durst at the first turn their face upon him, or else offer to stay him. But he looking about him, and seeing he was entered the city with very few men to help him, and perceiving he was environed by his enemies that gathered round about to set upon him, did things then, as it is written, wonderful and incredible, as well for the force of his hand, as also for the agility of his body, and with a wonderful courage and valiantness he made a lane through the midst of them, and overthrew also those he laid at: that some he made run to the furthest part of the city, and other for fear he made yield themselves, and to let fall their weapons before him. By this means Martius that was gotten out had some leisure to bring the Romans with more safety into the city.

The city being taken in this sort, the most part of the soldiers began incontinently to spoil, to carry away, and to lock up the booty they had won. But Martius was marvellous angry with them, and cried out on them, that it was no time now to look after spoil, and to run straggling here and there to enrich themselves, whilst the other Consul and their fellow citizens peradventure were fighting with their enemies: and how that, leaving the spoil, they should seek to wind themselves out of danger and peril. Howbeit, cry and say to them what he could, very few of them would hearken to him. Wherefore, taking those that willingly offered themselves to follow him, he went out of the city, and took his way towards that part, where he understood the rest of the army was: exhorting and entreating them by the way that followed him not to be faint-hearted, and oft holding up his hands to heaven, he besought the gods to be so gracious and favourable unto him, that he might come in time to the battle, and in good hour to hazard his life in defence of his countrymen.³

¹ Cp. I. iv. 56-61.

² Cp. I. iv. 44-5.

³ Cp. I. v.

THE VOLSCES OVERCOME IN BATTLE

Now the Romans when they . . . saw him at his first coming, all bloody, and in a sweat,¹ and but with a few men following him : some thereupon began to be afeared. But soon after, when they saw him run with a lively cheer to the Consul, and to take him by the hand, declaring how he had taken the city of Corioli, and that they saw the Consul Cominius also kiss and embrace him : then there was not a man but took heart again to him, and began to be of a good courage, some hearing him report from point to point the happy success of this exploit, and other also conjecturing it by seeing their gestures afar off. Then they all began to call upon the Consul to march forward, and to delay no longer, but to give charge upon the enemy. Martius asked him *how the order of their enemies' battle was, and on which side they had placed their best fighting men.* The Consul made him answer, that he thought *the bands which were in the vaward of their battle were those of the Antiates*, whom they esteemed to be the warlikest men, and which for valiant courage would give no place to any of the host of their enemies. Then prayed Martius to be *set directly against them.*² The Consul granted him, greatly praising his courage.

Then Martius, when both armies came almost to join, advanced himself a good space before his company, and went so fiercely to give charge on the vaward that came right against him, that they could stand no longer in his hands : he made such a lane through them, and opened a passage into the battle of the enemies. But the two wings of either side turned one to the other, to compass him in between them : which the Consul Cominius perceiving, he sent thither straight of the best soldiers he had about him. So the battle was marvellous bloody about Martius, and in a very short space many were slain in the place. But in the end the Romans were so strong, that they distressed the enemies, and brake their array : and scattering them, made them fly. Then they prayed Martius that he would retire to the camp, because they saw he was able to do no more, he was already so wearied with the great pain he had taken, and so faint with the great wounds he had upon him. But Martius answered them, that it was not for conquerors to yield, nor to be faint hearted : and thereupon began afresh to chase those that fled, until such time as the army of the enemies was utterly overthrown, and numbers of them slain and taken prisoners.³

MARTIUS REFUSES REWARD OF HIS SERVICE

The next morning betimes, Martius went to the Consul, and the other Romans with him. There the Consul Cominius, going up to his chair of state, in the presence of the whole army, gave thanks to the gods for so great, glorious, and prosperous a victory : then he spake to Martius, whose valiantness he commended beyond the moon, both for that he himself saw him do with his eyes, as also for that Martius had reported unto him. So in the end he willed Martius that he

¹ Cp. I. vi. 22 f.² Cp. I. vi. 51-9.³ Cp. II. ii. 120-7.

should choose *out of all the horses they had taken* of their enemies, and of all the goods they had won (*whereof there was great store*) *ten of every sort* which he liked best, before any distribution should be made to other.¹ Besides this great honourable offer he had made him, he gave him, in testimony that he had won that day the price of prowess above all other, *a goodly horse with a caparison, and all furniture to him*:² which the whole army beholding did marvellously praise and commend. But Martius, stepping forth, told the Consul he most thankfully accepted the gift of his horse, and was a glad man besides, that his service had deserved his general's commendation: and as for his other offer, which was rather a mercenary reward, than an honourable recompense, he would none of it, but was contented to have his equal part with other soldiers.³ 'Only this grace' (said he) 'I crave and beseech you to grant me. Among the Volscies there is an old friend and host of mine, an honest wealthy man, and now a prisoner, who, living before in great wealth in his own country, liveth now a poor prisoner in the hands of his enemies: and yet, notwithstanding all this his misery and misfortune, it would do me great pleasure if I could save him from this one danger: to keep him from being sold as a slave.'⁴ The soldiers, hearing Martius' words, made a marvellous great shout among them: and they were more that wondered at his great contentation and abstinence, when they saw so little covetousness in him, than they were that highly praised and extolled his valiantness. . . . For it is far more commendable to use riches well than to be valiant: and yet it is better not to desire them than to use them well.

MARTIUS SURNAMED CORIOLANUS

After this shout and noise of the assembly was somewhat appeased, the Consul Cominius began to speak in this sort: 'We cannot compel Martius to take these gifts we offer him, if he will not receive them: but we will give him such a reward for the noble service he hath done, as he cannot refuse. Therefore we do order and decree, that henceforth he be called Coriolanus, unless his valiant acts have won him that name before our nomination.'⁵ And so ever since he still bare the third name of Coriolanus. And thereby it appeareth, that the first name the Romans have, as Caius, was our Christian name now. The second, as Martius, was the name of the house and family they came of. The third was some *addition* given, either for some act or notable service, or for some mark on their face, or of some shape of their body, or else for some special virtue they had.

SEDITION AT ROME BY REASON OF FAMINE

Now when this war was ended, the flatterers of the people began to stir up sedition again, without any new occasion or just matter offered of complaint. For they did ground this second insurrection against the Nobility and Patricians upon the people's misery and

¹ Cp. l. ix. 31-6.

² Cp. l. ix. 58-62.

³ Cp. l. ix. 36-40.

⁴ Cp. l. ix. 79-89.

⁵ Cp. l. ix. 62-6.

misfortune, that could not but fall out, by reason of the former discord and sedition between them and the Nobility. Because the most part of the arable land within the territory of Rome was become heathy and barren for lack of ploughing, for that they had no time nor mean to cause corn to be brought them out of other countries to sow, by reason of their wars which made the extreme *dearth* they had among them. Now those busy prattlers that sought the people's good will by such flattering words, perceiving great scarcity of corn to be within the city, and, though there had been plenty enough, yet the common people had no money to buy it: they spread abroad false tales and rumours against the Nobility, that they, in revenge of the people, had practised and procured the extreme *dearth* among them.¹

CORIOLANUS STANDS FOR THE CONSULSHIP

Shortly after this, Martius stood for the Consulship: and the common people favoured his suit, thinking it would be a shame to them to deny and refuse the chiefest nobleman of blood, and most worthy person of Rome, and specially him that had done so great service and good to the commonwealth.² For the custom of Rome was at that time, that such as did sue for any office should for certain days before be *in the market-place, only with a poor gown on their backs* and without any coat underneath, to pray the citizens to remember them at the day of election: which was thus devised, either to move the people the more by requesting them in such mean apparel, or else because they might *shew them their wounds* they had gotten in the wars in the service of the commonwealth, as manifest marks and testimony of their valiantness.³ . . . Now Martius, following this custom, *shewed many wounds and cuts upon his body*, which he had received *in seventeen years' service at the wars*, and in many sundry battles, being ever the foremost man that did set out feet to fight. So that there was not a man among the people, but was ashamed of himself, to refuse so valiant a man: and one of them said to another, 'We must needs choose him Consul, there is no remedy.'⁴

SEE THE FICKLE MINDS OF COMMON PEOPLE

But when the day of election was come, and that Martius came to the market place with great pomp, accompanied with all the Senate, and the whole nobility of the city about him, who sought to make him Consul, with the greatest instance and entreaty they could, or ever attempted for any man or matter: then the love and good will of the common people turned straight to an hate and envy toward him, fearing to put this office of sovereign authority into his hands, being a man somewhat partial toward the nobility, and of great credit and authority amongst the Patricians, and as one they might doubt would take away altogether the liberty from the people.⁵ Whereupon, for these considerations, they refused Martius in the end, and made two other that were suitors, Consuls.

¹ Cp. I. i. 83-91 *n.*

² Cp. II. ii. 1-41.

³ Cp. II. ii. 140-6.

Cp. II. iii; and II. ii. 105 *n.*

⁵ Cp. II. iii.

The Senate, being marvellously offended with the people, did accompt the shame of this refusal rather to redound to themselves, than to Martius: but Martius took it in far worse part than the Senate, and was out of all patience. For he was a man too full of passion and choler, and too much given to over self-will and opinion, as one of a high mind and great courage, that lacked the gravity and affability that is gotten with judgement of learning and reason, which only is to be looked for in a governor of state: and that remembered not how wilfulness is the thing of the world, which a governor of a commonwealth for pleasing should shun, being that which Plato called solitariness. As in the end, all men that are wilfully given to a self-opinion and obstinate mind, and who will never yield to others' reason but to their own, remain without company, and forsaken of all men. For a man that will live in the world must needs have patience, which lusty bloods make but a mock at.

So Martius, being *a stout man of nature*, that never yielded in any respect, as one thinking that to overcome always, and to have the upper hand in all matters, was a token of magnanimity . . . went home to his house full freighted with spite and malice against the people, being accompanied with all the lustiest young gentlemen, whose minds were nobly bent as those that came of noble race, and commonly used for to follow and honour him. But then specially they flocked about him and kept him company, to his much harm: for they did but kindle and inflame his choler more and more, being sorry with him for the injury the people offered him, because he was their captain and leader to the wars, that taught them all martial discipline, and stirred up in them a noble emulation of honour and valiantness, and yet without envy, praising them that deserved best.

FREE CORN AND THE COCKLE OF SEDITION

In the mean season there came great plenty of corn to Rome, that had been bought part in Italy, and part was sent out of Sicile, as given by Gelon the tyrant of Syracuse: so that many stood in great hope that, the dearth of victuals being holpen, the civil dissension would also cease. The Senate sate in council upon it immediately: the common people stood also about the palace where the council was kept, gaping what resolution would fall out, persuading themselves that the corn they had bought should be sold good cheap, and that which was given should be divided *by the poll* without paying any penny, and the rather, because certain of the Senators amongst them did so wish and persuade the same.

But Martius, standing up on his feet, did somewhat sharply take up those who went about to gratify the people therein: 'and *called them people-pleasers, and traitors to the nobility.*¹ Moreover', he said, '*they nourished against themselves the naughty seed and cockle of insolency and sedition, which had been sowed and scattered abroad amongst the people, whom they should have cut off, if they had been wise, and have prevented their greatness: and not (to their own destruction)*

¹ Cp. III. i. 41-4

to have suffered the people to stablish a magistrate for themselves, of so great power and authority, as that man had, to whom they had granted it.¹ Therefore,' said he, 'they that gave counsel and persuaded that the corn should be given out to the common people gratis, as they used to do in the cities of Greece, where the people had more absolute power, did but only nourish their disobedience, which would break out in the end, to the utter ruin and overthrow of the whole state.'² For they will not think it is done in recompense of their service past, sithence they know well enough they have so oft refused to go to the wars, when they were commanded: neither for their mutinies when they went with us, whereby they have rebelled and forsaken their country: neither for their accusations which their flatterers have preferred unto them, and they have received, and made good against the Senate: but they will rather judge, we give and grant them this, as abasing ourselves, and standing in fear of them, and glad to flatter them every way. By this means their disobedience will still grow worse and worse: and they will never leave to practise new sedition and uproars.³ Therefore it were a great folly for us, methinks, to do it: yea, shall I say more? we should, if we were wise, take from them their Tribuneship, which most manifestly is the embasing of the Consulship, and the cause of the division of the city. The state whereof as it standeth is not now as it was wont to be, but becometh dismembered in two factions, which maintains always civil dissension and discord between us, and will never suffer us again to be united into one body.'⁴

Martius, dilating the matter with many such like reasons, won all the young men and almost all the rich men to his opinion: insomuch they rang it out, that he was the only man, and alone in the city, who stood out against the people, and never flattered them. There were only a few old men that spake against him, fearing lest some mischief might fall out upon it, as indeed there followed no great good afterward.

TUMULT AND ATTEMPTED ARREST OF MARTIUS

For the Tribunes of the people, being present at this consultation of the Senate, when they saw that the opinion of Martius was confirmed with the more voices, they left the Senate, and went down to the people, crying out for help, and that they would assemble to save their Tribunes. Hereupon the people ran on head in tumult together, before whom the words that Martius spake in the Senate were openly reported: which the people so stomached, that even in that fury they were ready to fly upon the whole Senate. But the Tribunes laid all the fault and burden wholly upon Martius, and sent their sergeants forthwith to arrest him, presently to appear in person before the people, to answer the words he had spoken in the Senate. Martius stoutly withstood these officers that came to arrest him. Then the Tribunes in their own persons, accompanied with the *Aediles*, went to fetch him by force, and so laid violent hands upon him. Howbeit

¹ Cp. III. i. 67-71. ² Cp. III. i. 90-111. ³ Cp. III. i. 112-38.

⁴ Cp. III. i. 141-8, 164-70.

the noble Patricians, gathering together about him, *made the Tribunes give back, and laid it sore upon the Aediles*:¹ so for that time, the night parted them, and the tumult appeased.

The next morning betimes, the Consuls seeing the people in an uproar running to the market place out of all parts of the city, they were afraid lest all the city would together by the ears: wherefore, assembling the Senate in all haste, they declared how it stood them upon, to appease the fury of the people with some gentle words, or grateful decrees in their favour: and moreover, like wise men they should consider, it was now no time to stand at defence and in contention, nor yet to fight for honour against the commonalty, they being fallen to so great an extremity, and offering such imminent danger. Wherefore they were to consider temperately of things, and to deliver some present and gentle pacification. The most part of the Senators that were present at this council thought this opinion best, and gave their consents unto it. Whereupon the Consuls, rising out of council, went to speak unto the people as gently as they could, and they did pacify their fury and anger, purging the Senate of all the unjust accusations laid upon them, and used great modesty in persuading them, and also in reproving the faults they had committed. And as for the rest, that touched the sale of corn, they promised there should be no disliking offered them in the price.

So the most part of the people being pacified, and appearing so plainly by the great silence and still that was among them, as yielding to the Consuls, and liking well of their words: the Tribunes then of the people rose out of their seats, and said: Forasmuch as the Senate yielded unto reason, the people also for their part, as became them, did likewise give place unto them: but notwithstanding, they would that Martius should come in person to answer to the articles they had devised. First, whether he had not solicited and procured the Senate to change the present state of the common-weal, and to take the sovereign authority out of the people's hands.² Next, when he was sent for by authority of *their officers*, why he did contemptuously resist and disobey. Lastly, seeing he had *driven and beaten the Aediles into the market place* before all the world, if, in doing this, he had not done as much as in him lay to raise civil wars, and to set one citizen against another.³ All this was spoken to one of these two ends, either that Martius against his nature should be constrained to humble himself, and to abase his haughty and fierce mind: or else, if he continued still in his stoutness, he should incur the people's displeasure and ill will so far, that he should never possibly win them again. Which they hoped would rather fall out so, than otherwise: as indeed they guessed, unhappily, considering Martius' nature and disposition.

THE ROCK TARPEIAN

So Martius came, and presented himself to answer their accusations against him, and the people held their peace and gave attentive ear, to hear what he would say. But where they thought to have heard

¹ Cp. III. i. 222-8.

² Cp. III. iii. 1-2, 62-5.

³ Cp. III. iii. 77-9.

very humble and lowly words come from him, he began not only to use his wonted boldness of speaking (which of itself was very rough and unpleasant, and did more aggravate his accusation, than purge his innocency) but also gave himself in his words to thunder, and look therewithal so grimly, as though he made no reckoning of the matter. This stirred coals among the people, who were in wonderful fury at it, and their hate and malice grew so toward him, that they could hold no longer, bear, nor endure his bravery and careless boldness. Whereupon Sicinius, the cruellest and stoutest of the Tribunes, after he had whispered a little with his companions, did openly pronounce, in the face of all the people, Martius as condemned by the Tribunes to die. Then presently he commanded the Aediles to apprehend him, and *carry him straight to the rock Tarpeian, and to cast him headlong down the same.*¹

When the Aediles came to lay hands upon Martius to do that they were commanded, divers of the people themselves thought it too cruel and violent a deed. The noble men also, being much troubled to see such force and rigour used, began to cry aloud, 'Help Martius': so those that laid hands of him being repulsed, they compassed him in round among themselves, and some of them holding up their hands to the people besought them not to handle him thus cruelly. But neither their words nor crying out could aught prevail, the tumult and hurly-burly was so great, until such time as the Tribunes' own friends and kinsmen, weighing with themselves the impossibleness to convey Martius to execution without great slaughter and murder of the nobility, did persuade and advise not to *proceed* in so violent and extraordinary a sort, as to put such a man to death without *lawful process* in law, but that they should refer the sentence of his death to the free voice of the people.² 'Well then,' said Sicinius, 'if that be the matter, let there be no more quarrel or dissension against the people, for they do grant your demand, that his cause shall be heard according to the law.' Therefore said he to Martius, 'We do will and charge you to appear before the people, the third day of our next sitting and assembly here, to make your purgation for such articles as shall be objected against you, that by free voice the people may give sentence upon you as shall please them.'

MARTIUS IS BANISHED BY THE PEOPLE

Martius, seeing the Senate in great doubt how to resolve, partly for the love and good will the nobility did bear him, and partly for the fear they stood in of the people, asked aloud of the Tribunes, what matter they would burden him with? The Tribunes answered him, that they would show how he did aspire to be King, and would prove that all his actions tended to *usurp tyrannical power* over Rome.³ Martius with that, rising up on his feet, said that thereupon he did willingly offer himself to the people, to be tried upon that accusation. Under these conditions the judgement was agreed upon, and the people assembled.

¹ Cp. III. i. 206-13.

² Cp. III. i. 312, 323.

³ Cp. III. iii. 57-65.

And first of all the Tribunes would in any case (whatsoever became of it) that the people would proceed to *give their voices by Tribes*,¹ and not by hundreds: for by this means the multitude of the poor needy people (and all such rabble as had nothing to lose, and had less regard of honesty before their eyes) came to be of greater force (because their voices were numbered *by the poll*)² than the noble honest citizens, whose persons and purse did dutifully serve the commonwealth in their wars. And then when the Tribunes saw they could not prove he went about to make himself King, they began to broach afresh the former words that Martius had spoken in the Senate, in hindering the distribution of the corn at mean price unto the common people, and persuading also to take the office of Tribuneship from them. And for the third, they charged him anew, *that he had not made the common distribution of the spoil he had gotten in the invading the territories of the Antiates*: but had of his own authority divided it among them, who were with him in that journey.³ But this matter was most strange of all to Martius, looking least to have been burdened with that, as with any matter of offence. Whereupon being burdened on the sudden, and having no ready excuse to make even at that instant, he began to fall a-praising of the soldiers that had served with him in that journey. But those that were not with him, being the greater number, cried out so loud and made such a noise, that he could not be heard.

To conclude, when they came to tell the voices of the Tribes, there were three voices odd, which condemned him to be banished for life. After declaration of the sentence, the people made such joy, as they never rejoiced more for any battle they had won upon their enemies, they were so brave and lively, and went home so jocundly from the assembly, for triumph of this sentence.⁴ The Senate again in contrary manner were as sad and heavy, repenting themselves beyond measure, that they had not rather determined to have done and suffered anything whatsoever, before the common people should so arrogantly and outrageously have abused their authority. There needed no difference of garments, I warrant you, nor outward shows to know a Plebeian from a Patrician, for they were easily discerned by their looks. For he that was on the people's side looked cheerily on the matter: but he that was sad, and hung down his head, he was sure of the noblemen's side. Saving Martius alone, who neither in his countenance, nor in his gait, did ever show himself abashed, or once let fall his great courage: but he only of all other gentlemen that were angry at his fortune did outwardly show no manner of passion, nor care at all of himself. When he was come home to his house again, and had taken his leave of his mother and wife, finding them weeping and shrieking out for sorrow, and had also comforted and persuaded them to be content with his chance: he went immediately to the gate of the city, accompanied with a great number of Patricians that brought him thither, from whence he went on his way with three or four of his friends only, taking nothing with him, nor requesting anything of any man.⁵

¹ Cp. III. iii. 11.² Cp. III. iii. 8 10.³ Cp. III. iii. 2 5.⁴ Cp. III. iii. 134 f.⁵ Cp. IV. i.

HE GOES DISGUISED TO ANTIUM

Now in the city of Antium there was one called Tullus Aufidius, who for his riches, as also for his nobility and valiantness, was honoured among the Volsces as a King. Martius knew very well that Tullus did more *malice and envy him*, than he did all the Romans besides: because that many times in battles where they met, they were ever at the encounter one against another, like lusty courageous youths, striving in all emulation of honour, and had encountered many times together.¹ Insomuch as, besides the common quarrel between them, there was bred a marvellous private hate one against another. Yet notwithstanding, considering that Tullus Aufidius was a man of a great mind, and that he above all other of the Volsces most desired revenge of the Romans, for the injuries they had done unto them: he did an act that confirmed the true words of an ancient poet, who said:

It is a thing full hard man's anger to withstand,
If it be stiffly bent to take an enterprise in hand,
For then most men will have the thing that they desire,
Although it cost their lives therefore, such force hath wicked ire.

And so did he. For he disguised himself in such array and attire, as he thought no man could ever have known him for the person he was, seeing him in that apparel he had upon his back:² and as Homer said of Ulysses,

So did he enter into the *enemy's town*.³

CORIOLANUS IN THE HOUSE OF AUFIDIUS

It was even twilight when he entered the city of Antium, and many people met him in the streets, but no man knew him.

So he went directly to Tullus Aufidius' house, and when he came thither, he got him up straight to the chimney hearth, and sat him down, and spake not a word to any man, *his face all muffled over*. They of the house, spying him, wondered what he should be, and yet they durst not bid him rise. For ill-favouredly *muffled and disguised* as he was, yet there appeared a certain majesty in his countenance, and in his silence: whereupon they went to Tullus, who was at supper, to tell him of the strange disguising of this man. Tullus rose presently from the board, and, coming towards him, asked him what he was, and wherefore he came.⁴

Then Martius unmuffled himself, and after he had paused a while, making no answer, he said unto him: '*If thou knowest me not yet, Tullus, and, seeing me, dost not perhaps believe me to be the man I am in deed, I must of necessity bewray my self to be that I am. I am Caius Martius, who hath done to thy self particularly, and to all the Volsces generally, great hurt and mischief, which I cannot deny for my surname of Coriolanus that I bear. For I never had other benefit nor recompense*

¹ Cp. I. viii; x. 7-10; iii. i. 13-15.

³ Cp. iv. iv. 24.

² Cp. iv. iv, stage direction.

⁴ Cp. iv. v. 5-58.

of all the true and *painful service* I have done, and the *extreme dangers* I have been in, but this only surname: *a good memory and witness of the malice and displeasure thou shouldst bear me*. Indeed the name only remaineth with me: for the rest the *envy and cruelty of the people of Rome* have taken from me, *by the sufferance of the dastardly nobility and magistrates, who have forsaken me*, and let me be banished by the people. *This extremity hath now driven me to come as a poor suitor to take thy chimney hearth, not of any hope I have to save my life thereby. For if I had feared death, I would not have come hither to have put my life in hazard: but pricked forward with spite and desire I have to be revenged of them that thus have banished me, whom now I begin to be avenged on, putting my person between my enemies.*

Wherefore, if thou hast any heart to be wreaked of the injuries thy enemies have done thee, speed thee now, and let my misery serve thy turn, and so use it, as my service may be a benefit to the Volscies: promising thee, that I will fight with better good-will for all you, than ever I did when I was against you, knowing that they fight more valiantly, who know the force of their enemy, than such as have never proved it. And if it be so that thou dare not, and that thou art weary to prove fortune any more: then am I also weary to live any longer. And it were no wisdom in thee to save the life of him, who hath been heretofore thy mortal enemy, and whose service now can nothing help nor pleasure thee.' ¹

Tullus, hearing what he said, was a marvellous glad man, and, taking him by the hand, he said unto him. 'Stand up, O Martius, and be of good cheer, for in proffering thyself unto us thou dost us great honour: and by this means thou mayest hope also of greater things at all the Volscies' hands.' So he feasted him for that time, and entertained him in the honourable manner he could, talking with him in no other matters at that present: but within few days after, they fell to consultation together in what sort they should begin their wars.

THE ROMANS IN VAIN SEND AMBASSADORS TO CORIOLANUS

In this while, all went still to wrack at Rome. For, to come into the field to fight with the enemy, they could not abide to hear of it, they were one so much against another, and full of seditious words, the nobility against the people, and the people against the nobility. Until they had intelligence at the length that the enemies had laid siege to the city of Lavinium, in the which were all the temples and images of the gods their protectors, and from whence came first their ancient original, for that Aeneas at his first arrival into Italy did build that city. Then fell there out a marvellous sudden change of mind among the people. . . . For the people thought good to repeal the condemnation and exile of Martius. . . . So they all agreed together to send ambassadors unto him, to let him understand how his countrymen did call him home again, and restored to him all his goods, and besought him to deliver them from this war.

¹ Cp. iv. v. 60-3, 71-107.

The ambassadors that were sent were Martius' familiar friends and acquaintance, who looked at the least for a courteous welcome of him, as of their familiar friend and kinsman. Howbeit they found nothing less.¹ For at their coming, they were brought through the camp to the place where *he was set in his chair of state*, with a marvellous and an unspeakable majesty, having the chiefest men of the Volscs about him:² so he commanded them to declare openly the cause of their coming. Which they delivered in the most humble and lowly words they possibly could devise, and with all modest countenance and behaviour agreeable for the same. When they had done their message, for the injury they had done him he answered them very hotly, and in great choler: but, as general of the Volscs, he willed them to restore unto the Volscs all their lands and cities they had taken from them in former wars: and moreover, that they should give them the like honour and freedom of Rome, as they had before given to the Latins. For otherwise they had no other mean to end this war, if they did not grant these honest and just conditions of peace. Thereupon he gave them thirty days' respite to make him answer. So the ambassadors returned straight to Rome, and Martius forthwith departed with his army out of the territories of the Romans.

This was the first matter wherewith the Volscs (that most envied Martius' glory and authority) did charge Martius with. Among those, Tullus was chief: who though he had received no private injury or displeasure of Martius, yet the common fault and imperfection of man's nature wrought in him, and it grieved him to see his own reputation blemished through Martius' great fame and honour, and so himself to be less esteemed of the Volscs, than he was before.³ This fell out the more, because every man honoured Martius, and thought he only could do all, and that all other governors and captains must be content with such credit and authority, as he would please to *countenance* them with.⁴ From hence they derived all their first accusations and secret murmurings against Martius.

THE EMBASSY OF THE WOMEN

[This thirty days' respite being past, and Martius returned into the dominions of the Romans again with all his army, the lady Valeria, own sister of Publicola, accompanied with a troop of the greatest ladies of Rome, waited upon Volumnia to persuade her that they should go all together to Martius to entreat him for their country's peace. So she, being persuaded,] took her daughter-in-law and Martius' children with her, and being accompanied with all the other Roman ladies, they went in troop together unto the Volscs' camp: whom when they saw, they of themselves did both pity and reverence her, and there was not a man among them that once durst say a word unto her. Now was Martius *set then in his chair of state*, with all the honours of a general, and, when he had spied the women coming afar off, he marvelled what the matter meant: but afterwards, knowing *his wife which came foremost*, he determined at the first to persist in his obstinate

¹ Cp. v. i.

² Cp. v. i. 64. iv. 24.

³ Cp. iv. vii.

⁴ Cp. v. v. 40.

and inflexible rancour. But overcome in the end with natural affection, and being altogether altered to see them, his heart would not serve him to tarry their coming to his chair, but coming down in haste, he went to meet them, and first he kissed his mother, and embraced her a pretty while, then his wife and little children. And nature so wrought with him, that the tears fell from his eyes, and he could not keep himself from making much of them, but yielded to the affection of his blood, as if he had been violently carried with the fury of a most swift-running stream.¹

THE ORATION OF VOLUMNIA TO HER SON

After he had thus lovingly received them, and perceiving that his mother Volumnia would begin to speak to him, he called the chiefest of the council of the Volsees to hear what she would say.² Then she spake in this sort. *'If we held our peace (my son) and determined not to speak, the state of our poor bodies and present sight of our raiment would easily bewray to thee what life we have led at home, since thy exile and abode abroad. But think now with thy self, how much more unfortunately than all the women living we are come hither, considering that the sight which should be most pleasant to all other to behold, spiteful fortune hath made most fearful to us: making my self to see my son, and my daughter here, her husband, besieging the walls of his native country. So as that which is the only comfort to all other in their adversity and misery, to pray unto the gods, and to call to them for aid, is the only thing which plungeth us into most deep perplexity. For we cannot (alas) together pray, both for victory for our country, and for safety of thy life also: but a world of grievous curses, yea more than any mortal enemy can heap upon us, are forcibly wrapped up in our prayers. For the bitter sop of most hard choice is offered thy wife and children, to forgo the one of the two: either to lose the person of thy self, or the nurse of their native country.*

*'For my self (my son) I am determined not to tarry till fortune in my lifetime do make an end of this war. For if I cannot persuade thee, rather to do good unto both parties, than to overthrow and destroy the one, preferring love and nature before the malice and calamity of wars: thou shalt see, my son, and trust unto it, thou shalt no sooner march forward to assault thy country, but thy foot shall tread upon thy mother's womb, that brought thee first into this world. And I may not defer to see the day, either that my son be led prisoner in triumph by his natural countrymen, or that he himself do triumph of them, and of his natural country.'*³

'For if it were so, that my request tended to save thy country in destroying the Volsees, I must confess, thou wouldst hardly and doubtfully resolve on that. For as to destroy thy natural country, it is altogether unmeet and unlawful: so were it not just, and less honourable, to betray those that put their trust in thee. But my only demand consisteth, to make a gaol-delivery of all evils, which delivereth equal benefit and safety both to the one and the other, but most honourable for the Volsees. For it shall appear that, having victory in their hands, they

¹ Cp. v. iii. 19-52.

² Cp. v. iii. 92-3.

³ Cp. v. iii. 94-125.

have of special favour granted us singular graces, peace, and amity, albeit themselves have no less part of both than we. Of which good, if so it came to pass, thy self is the only author, and so hast thou the only honour. But if it fail, and fall out contrary, thy self alone deservedly shall carry the shameful reproach and burden of either party. So, *though the end of war be uncertain, yet this notwithstanding is most certain, that, if it be thy chance to conquer, this benefit shalt thou reap of thy goodly conquest, to be chronicled the plague and destroyer of thy country.*¹ And if fortune also overthrow thee, then the world will say, that through desire to revenge thy private injuries, thou hast for ever undone thy good friends, who did most lovingly and courteously receive thee.²

MARTIUS IS SILENT

Martius gave good ear unto his mother's words, without interrupting her speech at all: and after she had said what she would, he held his peace a pretty while, and answered not a word. Hereupon she began again to speak unto him, and said: '*My son, why dost thou not answer me?* Dost thou think it good altogether to give place unto thy choler and desire of revenge, and *thinkest thou it not honesty* for thee to grant thy mother's request, in so weighty a cause? *Dost thou take it honourable for a noble man to remember the wrongs and injuries* done him, and dost not in like case think it an *honest* noble man's part to be thankful for the goodness that parents do show to their children, acknowledging the duty and reverence they ought to bear unto them? *No man living is more bound to show himself thankful in all parts and respects, than thy self:* who so unnaturally sheweth all ingratitude. Moreover (my son) thou hast sorely taken of thy country, exacting grievous payments upon them, in revenge of the injuries offered thee: *besides, thou hast not hitherto showed thy poor mother any courtesy.* And therefore, it is not only *honest*, but due unto me, that without compulsion I should obtain my so just and reasonable request of thee. But since by reason I cannot persuade thee to it, to what purpose do I defer my last hope?' And with these words, her self, his wife, and children fell down upon their knees before him.³

HIS RELENTANCE AND WITHDRAWAL

Martius, seeing that, could refrain no longer, but went straight and lift her up, crying out: '*Oh mother, what have you done to me?*' And holding her hard by the right hand, '*Oh mother,*' said he, '*you have won a happy victory for your country, but mortal and unhappy for your son:*'⁴ for I see myself vanquished by you alone.' These words being spoken openly, he spake a little apart with his mother and wife, and then let them return again to Rome, for so they did request him: and so, remaining in camp that night, the next morning he *dislodged*, and marched homewards into the Volscs' country again,⁵ who were not all of one mind, nor all alike contented. For some misliked him, and that he had done. Other, being well pleased that peace should be

¹ Cp. v. iii. 132-48.² Cp. v. iii. 154-82.³ Cp. v. iii. 182-9.⁴ Cp. v. iv. 45.

made, said that neither the one nor the other deserved blame nor reproach. Other, though they disliked that was done, did not think him an ill man for that he did, but said he was not to be blamed, though he yielded to such a forcible extremity. Howbeit no man contraried his departure, but all obeyed his commandment, more for respect of his worthiness and valiancy than for fear of his authority.

THE JOY IN ROME

Now the citizens of Rome plainly showed in what fear and danger their city stood of this war, when they were delivered. For so soon as the watch upon the walls of the city perceived the Volscs' camp to remove, there was not a temple in the city but was presently set open, and full of men wearing garlands of flowers upon their heads, sacrificing to the gods, as they were wont to do upon the news of some great obtained victory.¹ And this common joy was yet more manifestly showed by the honourable courtesies the whole Senate and people did bestow on their ladies. For they were all thoroughly persuaded, and did certainly believe, that the ladies only were cause of the saving of the city, and delivering themselves from the instant danger of the war.² Whereupon the Senate ordained that the magistrates, to gratify and honour these ladies, should grant them all that they would require. And they only requested that they would build a temple of Fortune of the women,³ for the building whereof they offered themselves to defray the whole charge of the sacrifices, and other ceremonies belonging to the service of the gods. Nevertheless, the Senate, commending their good will and forwardness, ordained that the temple and image should be made at the common charge of the city.

THE REVENGE OF TULLUS UPON CORIOLANUS

Now when Martius was returned again into the city of Antium from his voyage, Tullus, that hated and could no longer abide him for the fear he had of his authority, sought divers means to make him out of the way, thinking that if he let slip that present time, he should never recover the like and fit occasion again. Wherefore Tullus, having procured many other of his confederacy, required Martius might be deposed from his estate, *to render up account to the Volscs* of his charge and government.⁴ Martius, fearing to become a private man again under Tullus being general (whose authority was greater otherwise, than any other among all the Volscs) answered: he was willing to give up his charge, and would resign it into the hands of the lords of the Volscs, if they did all command him, as by all their commandment he received it. And moreover, that he would not refuse even at that present to give up an accompt unto the people, if they would tarry the hearing of it. The people hereupon called a common council, in which assembly there were certain orators appointed, that stirred

¹ Cp. v. iv. 51-66.

² Cp. v. iv. 67-73.

³ Cp. v. iii. 206-7.

⁴ Cp. iv. vii. 17, 26.

up the common people against him : and when they had told their tales, Martius rose up to make them answer.

Now, notwithstanding the mutinous people made a marvellous great noise, yet when they saw him, for the reverence they bare unto his valiantness, they quieted themselves, and gave still audience to allege with leisure what he could for his *purgation*.¹ Moreover, the honestest men of the Antiates, and who most rejoiced in peace, showed by their countenance that they would hear him willingly, and judge also according to their conscience. Whereupon Tullus fearing that if he did let him speak, he would prove his innocency to the people, because amongst other things he had an eloquent tongue, besides that the first good service he had done to the people of the Volscies did win him more favour, than these last accusations could purchase him displeasure : and furthermore, the offence they laid to his charge was a testimony of the good will they ought him, for they would never have thought he had done them wrong for that they took not the city of Rome, if they had not been very near taking of it by means of his approach and conduction. For these causes Tullus thought he might no longer delay his pretence and enterprise, neither to tarry for the mutining and rising of the common people against him : wherefore, those that were of the conspiracy began to cry out that he was not to be heard, nor that they would not suffer a traitor to usurp tyrannical power over the tribe of the Volscies.² who would not yield up his estate and authority. And in saying these words, they all fell upon him, and killed him in the market place, none of the people once offering to rescue him.

THE FUNERALS OF CORIOLANUS, AND WHAT THEREAFTER BEFELL

Howbeit it is a clear case, that this murder was not generally consented unto of the most part of the Volscies : for men came out of all parts to honour his body, and did honourably bury him, setting out his tomb with great store of armour and spoils, as the tomb of a worthy person and great captain.³ The Romans, understanding of his death, showed no other honour or malice, saving that they granted the ladies the request they made, that they might mourn ten months for him : and that was the full time they used to wear blacks for the death of their fathers, brethren, or husbands, according to Numa Pompilius' order, who stablished the same, as we have enlarged more amply in the description of his life. Now Martius being dead, the whole state of the Volscies heartily wished him alive again. For first of all they fell out with the Aeques (who were their friends and confederates) touching pre-eminence and place : and this quarrel grew on so far between them, that frays and murders fell out upon it one with another. After that the Romans overcame them in battle, in which Tullus was slain in the field, and the flower of all their force was put to the sword : so that they were compelled to accept most shameful conditions of peace, in yielding themselves subject unto the conquerors, and promising to be obedient at their commandment.

¹ Cp. v. i. 8.

² Cp. v. v. 84-6.

³ Cp. v. v. 143-5.

TWELFTH NIGHT

INTRODUCTION

SOURCE OF THE PLAY

It is a high adventure to trace the source of a work of genius. The one man who could do it well is probably the last man who would attempt it. His business being creation, he is much more intent on using his material than on asking where it came from. Nor is he ever likely to change. The chances are that when he has finished one work, and all the world is talking of him, he is already deaf to the past and gloriously planning another.

To reflect on this is not encouraging to people in our position. We aspire to discover the source of *Twelfth Night*, and the one man who knew the truth has not only left no message: it may be suspected that he would have thought us fools for our pains. For how do we propose to discover this truth, knowing so little of his habits, and what value do we propose to set upon the fragments that we find? Why, when we have the plays, search and rummage for their obscure originals? If the plays are good plays, why trouble to unearth the inferior stuff of which they were made? These are troublesome questions, and it is evident that on a matter so intricate as this, when the author chooses to be silent, we readers must be content to stammer. Most works of creative genius are casual and secret in their beginnings, the result of happy accidents, of little springings and flourishings in the mind. These are the true sources, and these are precisely what no man by taking pains can find out.

It should be confessed that in this matter of sources we exaggerate the extent and importance of our discoveries. It is so wonderful that anything should be discovered at all. When Shakespeare uses Plutarch or Holinshed we can follow him pace

Silence of
Authors.

Why look
for
Sources?

The
Sources of
Shake-
speare.

by pace. The historical play is a kind apart, and has its two laws. Even in his tragedies we can follow his movements with some confidence: for in tragedy he is never long at ease, and when he is not at ease he inclines to repose upon a model. It is his comedies that flout our methods and exhibit most plainly the hazards of source-hunting. In comedy his mind is free, and will not be tied. He is here and everywhere, with a hundred *aliases* defying detection. Pursue the game of sources too strictly in these regions and you will be lucky if you do not find yourself in the ditch, with Ariel's mocking tabor far in the distance.

Stevenson
and
Shake-
speare.

The perils of source-hunting have received so little attention in comparison with the pains and triumphs of it that perhaps an illustration of them will not be out of place. One of the few men of genius who have troubled to be explicit about the sources of their fiction is Stevenson, and I can imagine no better corrective to the zeal of the source-hunter than his two essays, 'My First Book: *Treasure Island*,' and 'The Genesis of *The Master of Ballantrae*'. It is the pride of the Shakespearean critic to have discovered, after two centuries of reading and rummaging, some source or other for every one of Shakespeare's plays, so that there is almost nothing from Shakespeare's hand about which he cannot say: 'Here he used this old play, this poem, this chronicle, this ballad: here he adapted, or invented, or improved.' I should like to see some critic who should not have read these essays of Stevenson give us the result of similar researches on *Treasure Island* and *The Master of Ballantrae*. This task should be easier than the other. It is three centuries now since Shakespeare lived, and his life is a mere profile. The books he read, the men he knew, the women he loved are most of them lost or forgotten, like his high talk and laughter. But Stevenson was a man of our own time; his life, his companions, his features, his talk, all his moods between laughter and despair are known to the world; and as for the books he read, a nod will procure them. Let us suppose our critic to have studied *The Master of Ballantrae* as he would study *Twelfth Night*, to discover its source. I have no doubt that he would unearth much that

*The Master
of Ballan-
trae.*

was true and much more that was not ; but what, with all his ingenuity, he never could unearth is this :

‘ I was walking one night in the verandah of a small house in which I lived, outside the hamlet of Saranac. It was winter ; the night was very dark : the air extraordinary clear and cold, and sweet with the purity of forests. From a good way below, the river was to be heard contending with ice and boulders : a few lights appeared, scattered unevenly among the darkness, but so far away as not to lessen the sense of isolation. For the making of a story here were fine conditions. I was besides moved with the spirit of emulation, for I had just finished my third or fourth perusal of *The Phantom Ship*. “ Come,” said I to my engine, “ let us make a tale, a story of many years and countries, of the sea and the land, savagery and civilization ; a story that shall have the same large features, and may be treated in the same summary elliptic method as the book you have been reading and admiring.” ’

Here, in a few lines, is the true source of *The Master of Ballantrac*, and here is what no critic could discover even in his dreams.

He would succeed better, perhaps, with *Treasure Island*. It *Treasure Island* would not take him long to find out where the skeleton came from, and the parrot, and the stockade. Poe’s *Tales*, *Robinson Crusoe*, and *Masterman Ready* are common property. Anything taken from them will be recognized. But these are details. The thing itself, the book, the design had nothing to do with reading nor with any origin more exalted than the playroom. It all came of a coloured map which Stevenson drew one wet afternoon to amuse a schoolboy, and called in fun, ‘ *Treasure Island*. ’ This was the true and only source of that glorious book. The map was his whole inspiration and almost the whole of his plot. He did not first write the book and then draw the map to suit it, as it is a thousand to one the critic would assume. Having drawn the map and liked it, he suddenly began to write the book. So casual are the first springings of creation, and so undiscoverable by the mere eye of reason and research ! Every modest man who sets out to explore a remote work of genius must feel this truth profoundly. It may be some appeasement to the spirit of

Shakespeare, long saddened by the barren woes and triumphs of his critics, that we have made this full acknowledgement before stepping, as we now do, into the twilight of Shakespearean research.

*Twelfth
Night*
acted
(1602).

The first light that we have on the history of *Twelfth Night* is from a private diary. The entry is of date February 2, 1602, and reads as follows :

‘ At our feast wee had a play called “ Twelue Night, or What you Will,” much like the Cominedy of Errores, or Menechmi in Plautus, but most like and neere to that in Italian called *Inganni*. A good practise in it to make the Steward beleeeve his Lady widdowe was in love with him, by counterfeyting a letter as from his Lady in generall termes, telling him what shee liked best in him, and prescribing his gesture in smiling, his appaiaile, &c., and then when he came to practise making him beleeeue they tooke him to be mad.’

Stories of
Viola and
Malvolio.

The writer of the diary was a certain John Manningham, a young member of the Middle Temple, with a young Templar’s taste for epigrams, gossip, and plays. The baldness of his entry conceals good sense. He clearly distinguishes the two parts of the play, the serious from the comic. The first reminded him of other plays, the second he found to be new. And this is the truth of the matter. When we talk of the source of *Twelfth Night* we are to be taken to mean the source of the love plot only. Except for a name or two which he took by the way, the underplot of comedy is Shakespeare’s own. *Twelfth Night*, for this purpose, becomes the story of Viola. The story of Malvolio, which so pleased our diarist, stands clear.

Suggested
Sources.

The pursuit of sources is plainly an instinct. It may be seen budding in Manningham’s first sentence. He names three plays which the story of Viola recalled to him : Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors*, the *Menacchmi* of Plautus, and an Italian play, *Gl’ Inganni*, or The Duperies. The first two plays he thought of together, and this was natural, for the *Menacchmi* is a Latin Comedy of Errors and the model of Shakespeare’s. It may further be said that when he thought of these plays he had

only one thing in mind, the confusion between the twins; for beyond this old device there is no resemblance between the plot of *Twelfth Night* and of these others. His suggestion of *Gl' Inganni* is more extensive and more fruitful. It covers the whole story of the lovers, and it has directed critics to a source. Manningham observed the resemblance of the plots; the critics who discovered Manningham went further and discovered the reason of the resemblance. The reason is that *Twelfth Night* and *Gl' Inganni* are founded on the same play.

I have followed Manningham in speaking of *Gl' Inganni* as one play, but the truth is there were two plays of that name before 1600, and a third in 1604. All three are copies at first or second hand of a much more famous play, which was imitated and admired in half the countries of Europe for nearly a century after it appeared: *Gl' Ingannati* or *The Dupes*. It was composed and acted by a society of amateurs in Siena in 1531. They called themselves, with the ceremonious waggery of the time, the *Accademia degli Intronati* or the Academy of Boobies, and this play was in some sort the first-fruits of their community, for their society was founded just six years before. Whatever they might choose to call themselves they were clearly no fools at play-writing. If the Prologue may be trusted, the play was composed by the Boobies in a body in 'about three days'! This would have been remarkable even had the play been bad; but *Gl' Ingannati* is an excellent play, racy, vigorous, original. It had that rare thing in plays, a brand new plot; and in other respects it departed from the beaten track. It had a great vogue. From 1537, when it was published at Venice, it was continually reprinted down to 1611. It was imitated in Italy, in the three *Inganni* plays; it was twice done into Spanish; it was imitated, or rather translated, in France, in Charles Estienne's *Les Abusez* (1543, 1548); and in whole or in part it was three times staged in England. From the players it passed to the novelists. Bandello the Italian told the story in his collection of 214 tales (1554), and his countryman Cinthio in his collection of 100 (1565). Belleforest the Frenchman took it from Bandello and included

The Dupes
(1531): its
European
vogue.

it in his *Histoires Tragiques* (1570). Barnabe Riche the Englishman, working on Belleforest, produced an English version in 1581. It is called *Apolonius and Silla*, and is one of eight stories which he gathered together, in a collection entitled *Riche his Farewell to Militarie Profession*, 'for the onely delight of the courteous Gentlewomen bothe of England and Irelande.'

Foreign
Plays in
England.

It might have been foretold that so popular a play could not long escape the attentions of the English stage. It was no bar to these attentions that the play was foreign. So long as a play was new it mattered little what language it was in, or in what country it had first given pleasure. Everybody who read and wrote at all had some smattering of the tongues; professional translators abounded; and a play that had given pleasure in one country was likely to give pleasure in another. Stephen Gosson, the anti-playgoer of the day, declared in 1581 that there was scarcely a comedy in Latin, French, Italian, or Spanish that had not been ransacked to furnish the stages of London.

The Dupes
in
England:
Laelia
(1595).

Gl' Ingannati was early in the market. It was first used, so far as we know, in a play called *The Buggbears*, written about 1564, and printed only the other day, perhaps for the first time in England: a miserable performance, but typical, rawly compounded of two Italian plays, *Gl' Ingannati* and another, with a dash of Terence to stop the bleeding. Thirty years passed before it appeared again upon the stage, and in the interval its story, long known to readers of Bandello, had become accessible in Belleforest's French and Riche's English. In 1595 a version was presented at Cambridge in Latin, called *Laelia*.¹ It was composed and acted in honour of Lord Essex, who thought so highly of the performance that in a dance or pageant which he produced eight months later before the Queen, he gave two of the parts to two of the young Cambridge actors. The play had made a stir. The merits of the original had shone through its Latin. Such an event, we may imagine, did not pass unnoticed by the playwrights of London. Their business being to please, their first

¹ First printed and edited by Professor Moore Smith (Cambridge: 1910). I am indebted to him for the historical information in his Introduction.

duty was to study the taste of their patrons. The best of them were on the watch for hints, even for hints from the Universities. It was partly the successful performance of a Latin *Macbeth* before King James at Oxford that put Shakespeare upon trying the subject himself. At any rate his own *Macbeth* seems to have been acted within the twelvemonth. It was probably the unusual success of the Cambridge *Laelia* that first directed his attention to its plot, and sent him to *Gl' Ingannati* and the novelists.

The serious plot of *Twelfth Night* and the serious plot of *Gl' Ingannati* are the same. Change Viola to Lelia and Sebastian to Fabritio; substitute for the dateless shipwreck the sack of Rome of 1527, and for the imaginary city in Illyria the actual Italian city of Modena; let Orsino be Flaminio and Olivia Isabella, and let them behave as they behave in *Twelfth Night*, and you have the story of *Gl' Ingannati*. This is the story which in so many forms travelled over sixteenth-century Europe. The question is, in which of these forms was it used by Shakespeare?

It used to be held—it may be held still—that Shakespeare had nothing to do with *Gl' Ingannati* and its foreign imitations; that his researches began and ended with the story in Riche; that, in short, the story of Viola is simply the story of Apolonius and Silla dramatized. How far this opinion was dictated by sentiment, how far by superstition, I shall not attempt to determine. The sentiment of patriotism takes strange forms,¹ and the superstition that Shakespeare read no language but his own dies hard. It may have seemed more honourable to us that the source of *Twelfth Night* should be a story, however foreign, in an English book, and more honourable to Shakespeare that the miracle of his genius should be undimmed by the advantages of education. Because Shakespeare was never at a University he must be thought to have spent no more time on the tongues than his own Sir Andrew. But Mr. Jusserand has just been telling us how well

Twelfth Night
and *The Dupes*.

Barnabe
Riche;
and
Shake-
speare's
Educa-
tion.

¹ 'Happy among Shakespeare's plays is *Twelfth Night*! A source of its main plot is thus traced to England, and close to Shakespeare's door, immediately before an assured date of its composition' (Mr. Furness, on the discovery of *Laelia* in 1898). This is madness.

he knew French ; we have just been hearing, from an American scholar, of the French wig-maker's where he lodged¹ ; and he must be a very bold or a very obstinate man who shall assert that he had not enough Italian to skim a novel or a play. So much Italian as that implies was one of the commonest accomplishments of the age ; to a busy dramatist it was not so much an accomplishment as a professional necessity ; and an intelligent man with a little Latin may acquire it in a fortnight.

The Four
Sources of
Twelfth
Night.

That Shakespeare consulted Riche is certain ; I think it even probable that he consulted him first ; but it is equally certain that he consulted others. Viola's shipwreck and her attendant captain certainly come from Riche ; but the names of Fabian and Malvolio are from *Gl' Ingannati*.² Riche's Olivia (Juliana) is a widow, and in the first presentation of the play (as we learn from Manningham) Shakespeare's Olivia was a widow also. But it cannot be by accident that Viola in her disguise adopts the name Cesare in the second *Inganni* of 1592 and the name Cesario in *Twelfth Night* eight years later. In *Gl' Ingannati* and its foreign successors Viola breaks faith with the Count and in her embassy to Olivia speaks perfidiously against the match. This is a blot which is absent from Riche's version and from Shakespeare's. It is fundamental to Shakespeare's Viola that she should be faithful in everything. I think that Shakespeare took this improvement from Riche, but he might have taken it from Bandello, from whom it came to Riche. Lastly, there is the title of the play, 'Twelfth Night,' which in Italy is called 'Epiphany Night,' and in France 'The Night of Kings.' It cannot be dismissed as insignificant that Epiphany Night (*Notte di Beffana*) should be mentioned in the Prologue to *Gl' Ingannati*, or that the Night of Kings (*Nuict des Roys*) should be mentioned in the Prologue to its French translation, *Les Abusez*. Even those who think that Shakespeare's Italian was unequal to the first are con-

¹ Prof. C. W. Wallace, *Harper's Magazine*, March, 1910.

² Fabio is the name assumed by Lelia, our Viola. Malvolio is from Malevolti, a name in the Introduction to *Gl' Ingannati*. Except for these two names, everything in Shakespeare's underplot seems to be his own

strained to admit that his French may have been equal to the second.

There are many other items that might be used to swell the catalogue of liabilities, parallels without reason and without end. It would be unfair to the reader even to cite them, for they can inspire nothing but weariness and disgust. If they serve any purpose it is to prove, what I suppose few sensitive persons will dispute, that the hell of critics is paved with the parallels they drew in life. Fortunately, we need not descend so low for a conclusion. It is plain, from the reasonable evidence, that whatever version Shakespeare began with (and that he began with Riche is at the least probable), he must have turned over, in the course of his preparations, several of the other versions as well. From three at any rate, *Gl' Ingannati*, *Gl' Inganni* (1592), and *Les Abusez*, he took something tangible, though it were only a name.¹ This was not much to take, but it is permissible to think that he found it a useful lesson in the capacities of the plot to observe the various shifts and devices of his predecessors in their management of it. Even the names might seem to him a sufficient reward. It is astonishing how dependent the most inventive writers are on chance for the names of their characters. Six of the names in *The Tempest* come from Eden's *History of Travel* (1577), which Shakespeare seems to have read for the sake of his island as Stevenson read Johnson's *Buccaneers* for the sake of his. And yet five of the six are ordinary names which any one might have thought of. He liked, it seems, to have such details settled for him. Once a character was baptized he could begin upon the real business of making him live.

¹ I cannot find that Shakespeare got anything from *Laelia* beyond the suggestion that its plot was worth looking into. Now a friend might have told him this and directed him to its source. None of the parallels produced by its editor are convincing. I could add two: that Sir Andrew's 'old man' in I. iii. 28 is a reminiscence of the Old Man, 'Senex', whose place Sir Andrew takes as the ridiculous lover of Olivia, and that Sir Toby's *cubiculo* in III. ii. 59 comes from the scene where the landlord offers his guests their pick of a hundred *cubiculo*. But I do not for a moment believe in either.

CONSTRUCTION AND DESIGN

The two
Plots.

LIKE all good comedies, *Twelfth Night* is partly serious and partly comic. Like all Shakespeare's happy comedies it is a mixture of love and fun. The love story is the plot. It is serious, southern, and poetical. The comic story is the underplot. It is not serious, it is not southern, and it is in prose. You might call the love plot 'The Adventures of Viola in search of a Husband, or The Fortunate Shipwreck'; for Viola is the heart of it. To speak by the method, if you would peruse it you must turn to the first chapter of her bosom (I. v. 244-5). She is a poetical proof of the very true proverb that wedding, like hanging, goes by destiny, and that the maid who is born to be wedded will never be drowned. The comic plot, or interlude, as Feste calls it ('I was one, sir, in this interlude', v. i. 384), is equally susceptible of titles. You might call it 'The Misadventures of Malvolio, or The Puritan Gull'd'. The first is better, because it states the fact and takes no sides. It expresses our modern idea of the part; the second, the ideas of the time.

Character
of the
Play.

Neither of the plots needs clearing up. The entanglements on which they turn are bewildering only to the actors. There are no dubious characters in the play, except Malvolio. We are never in doubt about a motive, nor in the dark about a design. Everything is open, candid, and satisfactory. The satire is kindly, and hurts nothing. The end is such as we foresaw. The play has no sediment. Everything is digested in the last scene, except Malvolio's rage, which he takes off with him to his corner. From first to last there are no incongruities of character. 'Anything that's mended,' says the Clown, 'is but patched.' There is no patching in this play, for nobody mends. There are no repentances, no stage-conversions such as disfigure the conclusions of some other plays, *The Two Gentlemen*, for example, and *As You Like It*. It is a clean finish. All the characters are consistent, and end as they began. The Clown jests, Malvolio stamps, Toby goes off drunk, Sir Andrew follows, the lovers make love, and the last word

of the actors echoes the first. Orsino, the panegyrist of fancy, is left with his 'fancy's queen' (I. i. 9-15; v. i. 400).

The key of Twelfth-Night romance is given, after Shakespeare's The Opening manner, in the opening scene. The young Duke, being then in perfect health, sitting among his Lords, breathes out in golden verse his luxurious agonies to the god of love. It is a picture of eternal youth, framed in a setting of music, poetry, and flowers. He mixes his sighs with the tears of Olivia, feeding on both.

O! she that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
How will she love, when the rich golden shaft
Hath killed the flock of all affections else
That live in her; when liver, brain, and heart,
These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and fill'd
Her sweet perfections with one self king.
Away before me to sweet beds of flowers;
Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.
(I. i. 33-41).

Such an egoist is youthful love that there is nothing either in the joys or woes of others that does not minister to it and feed its flame. The climate of these sweet tortures is disclosed in the second scene. Viola comes to land. 'What country, friends, is this?' 'This is Illyria, lady.' We are on those Adriatic coasts where the East and West lie so neighbourly: in Illyria, one of the Elysiums of fiction. We hear in other places of Candy or Crete, and ships named the Tiger and the Phoenix: good names both, native to those seas and coasts. They are the names of inns at Ephesus in the *Comedy of Errors*, and it was in a ship called the Tiger that Massicus came 'cleaving the blue' in the midnight assault of Aeneas on the Rutilian camp (*Aeneid*, x. 166). We hear also of Messaline, which by some oversight of nature seems never to have existed. It has been sought for by some and rechristened Metelin, for Mitylene, because, I suppose, Mitylene is a real place. As if that mattered!

In this climate, being, as it is, the climate of romance, it is the rule that the lovers shall love at once. Orsino is stricken at

The Man-
ners of the
Lovers.

a glance, Olivia in a single interview ; Viola, in three days, is Orsino's slave. The only pair who fall in love like ordinary mortals, and grow fond by gradation, are Sir Toby and Maria, who are outside romance. The lovers are as sudden in their resolutions as in their love. In three days Orsino has emptied his heart to Cesario, and as good as named her in his will ; in an instant's reflection Olivia has torn off her ring and sent it post-haste after a messenger whose name, even, is unknown to her, and of whose existence, half an hour before, she was completely unaware. In this world, where passion is concerned, there is neither measure nor remorse. To doubt is impossible ; to hesitate is treason. The blind god rules all. And this is true of every passion. Olivia's grief for her brother is as luxuriously abandoned as Orsino's love.

Viola and
her Part.

Of the three lovers there is only one who can conceal emotion and act a part. This is Viola, who is the chief agent of their transactions, and the central figure of the play. So far as we are anxious about any one's fortunes in an atmosphere so little touched with anxiety, it is about hers. She is the only person in the play who deliberately risks something and plays for happiness. Not that we doubt her nerve, or indeed her ultimate success. Her fortitude and readiness are patent on her first entrance (I. ii). A lady who can pun with sailors on an unknown coast, having just escaped drowning, and seen, as she supposed, her brother perish, is not likely to fail in anything on which she sets her mind. She shows from the start those qualities which were to make her so spirited an ambassador in so trying an embassy. It has been said, indeed, that she acts with too much spirit ; that a real woman, the Viola of the confession (II. v), would have acted with less design. ' Viola,' says Dr. Johnson, commenting on the second scene, ' seems to have formed a very deep scheme with very little premeditation. She is thrown by shipwreck on an unknown coast, hears that the prince is a bachelor, and resolves to supplant the lady whom he courts.' And again : ' Viola is an excellent schemer, never at a loss ; if she cannot serve the lady she will serve the duke.' It is true. Indeed, we may go further and say that any

The De-
signs of
Viola.

ordinary woman in Viola's position, far from making a secret of her arrival or framing, at such a moment, a scheme of life, would have hastened to disclose herself to the nearest consul and resume her interrupted voyage. The whole incident, on this way of thinking, becomes improbable. Viola is either unwomanly or she is unreal. To the first part of this reasoning, that the incident is improbable, there is only one answer. Every play that ever was written begins with a request. It asks us to admit something. Suppose, says the dramatist, these people to have come together and to be in these positions, let me show you what happens. This is the hypothesis of the play. Accept it, and everything follows. Refuse it, and the play cannot go on. It is the hypothesis of *Twelfth Night* that Viola does none of the things which an ordinary woman would have done in her position, but forms instead, boldly and on the instant, the design which the play unravels. We cannot refuse this. It is asking more of us than modern dramatists do, who depict the life of the day ; but something must be allowed to romance. All fiction rests upon belief. Romance lives by it. The dramatist who goes beyond life to please us is entitled to a larger share of our belief. It is our one way of paying him, and, after all, there is no price which we pay so easily or with half so good a will.

Having passed this incident, and adjusted our minds to the requirements of drama and romance, let us return to Viola, now struggling into doublet and hose at the friendly captain's. To a cheerful mind, such as it is our duty to cultivate, there is nothing difficult in this disguise, nor in any disguise that looks like being interesting. But it has been thought unnatural by some readers, which is a slur on Shakespeare, and brazen by others, which is a slur on Viola. We can tolerate neither. The disguising of heroines was popular on the Elizabethan stage, and there were excellent reasons for its popularity, notably the ironical entanglements and farcical situations which it created : such an entanglement as Olivia's affair with Cesario, and such a situation as Viola's duel with the foolish knight. It was also an attractive thing to watch. As a feat of acting it was interesting. Women's parts

as disclosed in
i. ii.

Viola's
Disguise.

being always in that age performed by boys or beardless youths, it excited an audience to see an actor imitating, as it were, an imitation of himself, by playing a girl as she would play a man. These attractions explain the popularity of the fashion. Its origin is more remote. It came out of an accident in the history of manners, which is worth relating.

The
Origin of
these
Disguises.

In the communities of Athens and Rome, where those comedies were written from which all European comedy is sprung, it was a law of propriety that respectable girls should never be seen in public places. It followed that no respectable girl could be presented on the comic stage, for in Greek and Roman comedy the scene is always a public place. The Italians of the Renaissance, when they took to writing comedies on the Roman model (plays like *Gl'Innammati* from which the plot comes of *Twelfth Night*), were faced with the same difficulty. Italian custom agreed with the custom of the ancients, that respectable girls should not be seen in streets. How was the difficulty to be removed? There was only one way, as the Italian novelists had already discovered. It was to put girls into male disguise. Here, as in so much else in the world, the proper clothes solved every difficulty. They made everything seem right, and Society demands no more. The heroine might now address the footlights, and talk and walk in the fullest publicity which the dramatist cared to give her, without ceasing to be respectable and a proper object of contemplation to families. The idea was not long in spreading. From Italy it came to England, with the plays and novels in which it was employed. Lyly used it with success before Shakespeare, and Beaumont and Fletcher after him. It was accepted in England, where there was no necessity for it, as a diverting expedient, and flourished without a shock to modesty, because the parts were taken by boys. No one was fonder of it than Shakespeare. Julia in *The Two Gentlemen*, Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, Rosalind in *As You Like It*, Imogen in *Cymbeline*, are some of Viola's associates in the temporary eclipse of hose and doublet, and there are no franker, more natural, more feminine women in fiction.

Viola's courage and clear-headedness, her instinctive perception

of what is to be done, are the peculiar marks of Shakespeare's happy women. If her shrewdness and foresight lead us to think of her as anything more or less than woman, they have deceived us, and we are in the wrong. There is no contradiction between her practice and her love. She is as true to her sex in her interviews with Olivia as in her confessions to the Duke. She is one of Shakespeare's many illustrations of the grand paradox of woman's nature, that there is no creature in the world more practical than a woman in love, or less practical, according to occasion. When they are private, these Violas and Rosalinds, talking to a friend or to themselves, softness will steal in. A kind of languor descends upon them. The beating heart has its way. They remember what they are made of : that women's hearts are waxen : that 'such as they are made of, such they be'. But in public their spirit is unflinching. A noble self-defiance supports them. With every pang of affection they only grow more witty. They even exult in their peculiar power of being cool and piercing in exact proportion to the strength of their passion. This is a power denied to man, who is commonly more foolish the more he is in love. Many men, who read Shakespeare and write about him, have noted without appreciating the difference. The masculine public persists in believing that women are by nature sentimental, and designed by Providence to be clingers upon men. All women, probably, have always agreed with Shakespeare. He does them more honour. He pays them the just and high compliment of supposing that they may have knowledge, shrewdness, wit, and courage, without ceasing to be wholly feminine and the objects of desire. In his ideal woman the heart and head sway equal. Beside her, man is a creature of extravagance : all head one moment, all heart the next. Orsino felt this, as he talked to Viola.

For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,
Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,
More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,
Than women's are.

(II. iv. 32-6.)

In woman alone, Shakespeare seems to say, will you find that

perfect harmony and balance of the parts of nature which is the basis and first condition of a happy life.

Viola,
Orsino,
and the
sadness of
love.

How much it cost Viola to play her part we feel rather than hear in her colloquies with the Duke. Charles Lamb has described, in an essay to which I refer the reader, the manner in which the part was played by one of the best actresses of his time. 'There is no giving an account,' he says, 'how she delivered the disguised story of her love for Orsino. It was no set speech, that she had foreseen, so as to weave it into an harmonious period, line necessarily following line, to make up the music—yet I have heard it so spoken, or rather *read*, not without its grace and beauty—but, when she had declared her sister's history to be a "blank" and that she "never told her love", there was a pause, as if the story had ended—and then the image of the "worm in the bud" came up as a new suggestion—and the heightened image of "Patience" still followed after that, as by some growing (and not mechanical) process, thought springing up after thought, I would almost say, as they were watered by her tears. So in these fine lines—

Write loyal cantons of contemned love—

Holla your name to the reverberate hills—(i. v. 291, 293)

there was no preparation made in the foregoing image for that which was to follow. She used no rhetoric in her passion; or it was nature's own rhetoric, most legitimate then, when it seemed altogether without rule or law' (*On Some of the Old Actors*).¹ This is the very accent of the part. The pathos of love is never forgotten in Shakespeare's comedies. A rich sadness is the root of half their wit. You cannot be witty in the Shakespearean manner on mere high spirits. They are too thin for romance, which is a country of tears and laughter, of dawns and twilights as well as day. This sadness comes in sometimes where we should never have looked for it, by a mood of the poet. In the merry comedy of *Love's Labour's Lost*, when the fun is near its climax and the Princess and her maids are reviewing their lovers' fairings, Cupid, says Rosaline (not meaning much),

¹ This Essay (in the *Essays of Elia*) should be read by every reader of *Twelfth Night*.

hath been five thousand years a boy.

Kath. Ay, and a shrewd unhappy gallows too.

Ros. You'll ne'er be friends with him ; he kill'd your sister.

Kath. He made her melancholy, sad, and heavy ;

And so she died.

That is all. Nothing led up to it, and nothing comes of it. Three lines more and they are pelting each other with puns. It was a passing touch of life which the poet could not refuse. So Viola is sad when she thinks of love, and the Duke feeds on music, with its dying falls and songs of dead true lovers. Nothing brisk will serve him. He is for something ' old and plain '.

Come away, come away, death,
And in sad cypress let me be laid.

His love has made him simple, as love will if it be touched with grief. The ballads of the people, those ' old and plain ' things, have this sadness too. There are few happy lovers in the old ballads.

It is a question with some readers which part of *Twelfth Night* holds them more : the fortunes of Viola or the humours of Sir Toby and his friends. The question is unimportant, for it is plain that neither part would serve without the other. Viola and her circle are as necessary to the romance of *Twelfth Night* as Sir Toby and his circle to its humour. True love alone can never make a comedy. True love is serious, and comedy should amuse ; it is exclusive, and comedy should be friendly ; it is unsocial, and the subject of comedy is society. Comedy is a plump figure, and holds its sides ; Love is lean, and holds a hand upon its heart. Comedy laughs ; Love sighs. These are the contrarieties which romantic comedy sets out to resolve. It proceeds civilly, by compromise, neither forbidding Comedy to laugh, in the interests of romance, nor forbidding Love to sigh, in the interests of Comedy. Let the joke be good and the sighs be true, it sees no reason in literature why they should quarrel. In romantic comedy the laughers and the sighers live side by side, like good neighbours. There is only one condition of this neighbourhood. It is that neither community shall commit excess, or compete for attention at the

expense of the other. There is nothing more wearisome than the uninterrupted spectacle of endearments in which we have no share, nor anything more awful than the gravity which falls upon a company that has laughed too much. The solemnity of love must be relieved by the generosity of laughter, and the irresponsibility of laughter by the seriousness of love. This is the principle of romantic comedy. It is on this principle that we pass from Viola in the second scene of *Twelfth Night* to Sir Toby and Maria in the third.

The Comic
Atmos-
phere of
*Twelfth
Night*.

The comic underplot of *Twelfth Night* opens in the third scene. We are presented to the chief conspirators, Sir Toby and Maria, and to Sir Andrew the dupe. Two scenes pass and our acquaintance is extended to Malvolio and the Clown, which makes up the company.¹ It is with a comfortable sense of shock that we encounter this underworld. The etiquette of romance is exacting, and two short scenes have hardly tamed our 'more coarser senses'. It is pleasant to step downstairs. There is a snugness in the buttery hatch denied to Olivia's drawing-room. A different syntax controls the speech of these quarters, which comes kindly to the ear. 'The element itself, till seven years' heat,' &c. (I. i. 26 f.), 'Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,' &c. (I. ii. 17 f.), are the phrase neither of men nor angels. None but actors ever spoke them. But 'What a plague means my niece, to take the death of her brother thus? I am sure care's an enemy to life' (I. iii. 1-3)—this is the very tune of unconverted man, speaking his mind with all his sins upon him, and we love it as we love a redeeming vice. It is the dialect of life. The air seems to change as we enter these scenes. It is Illyrian no longer. These strayed realists, fools, and drinkers, who raise the owl at midnight with their ditties and burn sack to bring in the morning (because it is 'too late to go to bed'), who talk of Puritans and weavers, of coziers' catches and beds of Ware, and count the bells of St. Bennet, one, two, three, were never bred on the Adriatic. We are in the paradise of humorists and odd fellows, known for centuries to astonished

¹ They are all touched on in Lamb's Essay (see p. xx), to which I refer readers for the best study of Malvolio in existence.

Europe by the name of England. The blood of the house of Falstaff is in Sir Toby's veins ; Sir Andrew, but for the accident of fortune, might have sat on the same bench with Justice Silence ; and Feste, the third man and best singer in this trio, is no other than Will Kempe, fool-in-ordinary to the company of the Chamberlain's Servants, of which Shakespeare was a leading and worthy member.

DATE OF COMPOSITION

LIKE the majority of Shakespeare's plays, *Twelfth Night* was first printed in 1623, seven years after his death. This date, therefore, is useless to us. We desire to know when the play was written. There are two dates, and two only, which lead direct to a conclusion. One is 1598, the other is 1602. In the first of these years a book was published by a certain Francis Meres, called *Palladis Tamia* or *Wits Treasury*. It is a very ordinary book, but it has one remarkable thing in it : a list of Shakespeare's plays up to date. Shakespeare, says Meres, is the most excellent among the English both for comedy and tragedy, witness, for comedy, ' his *Gentlemen of Verona*, his *Errors*, his *Love labors lost*, his *Love labours wonne*,¹ his *Midsummers night dreame*, and his *Merchant of Venice* : for tragedy his *Richard the 2.* *Richard the 3.* *Henry the 4.* *King John.* *Titus Andronicus* and his *Romeo and Juliet*.' This is a good list. It may not be exhaustive, but it is full and representative. When, therefore, we observe that *Twelfth Night*, one of the best and most popular of English comedies, is absent from it, we do right to conclude that in 1598 *Twelfth Night* was still unknown to the public and the stage.

The second date, 1602, comes from an entry in a private diary. From this entry (already quoted on p. viii) it appears that at the Readers' Feast in the Middle Temple, on Candlemas, which is the second day of February, 1602, John Manningham, a student of law, saw a piece called *Twelfth Night*, which answers exactly in his description of it to the *Twelfth Night* we know. The conclusion is plain. Shakespeare's play, which must have been written after 1598, must equally have been written before 1602.

¹ Another name, probably, for *All's Well that Ends Well*.

Testimony
of Meres
(1598)

Testimony
of Man-
ningham
(1602).

To some minds this is satisfactory, but curiosity will know more. We have three years to choose from. Can we come nearer still? Is there anything in the play which points to one of these years rather than another?

Passages
in the Play
(II. v. 199,
III. iv. 310,
III. ii. 31,
88).

There are three such things in the play: trifles in themselves, the thumb-marks of time, but not to be neglected when a date is our object. There is the Sophy in II. v. 199 and III. iv. 310; there is the Dutchman's beard in III. ii. 31; there is the 'new map with the augmentation of the Indies' in III. ii. 88. If you will look at the notes on these passages you will see that the first points to 1600, the second possibly, and the third probably to the new edition of Hakluyt's *Voyages* which appeared in 1599-1600. I say they point to these dates; perhaps it would be fairer to say that they suggest them, for they are hints or suggestions rather than indications. But they have a topical sound; we feel that when they were uttered the audience smiled to recognize them; and it is noticeable that they are repeated. We have the Sophy twice, and if the commentators are right, we have Hakluyt twice also. And they all suggest the same year, 1600.

Style of
Twelfth
Night.

There is something else to be said about the play. Only from reading it we should suppose that it was written about the same time as *Much Ado* and *As You Like It*, that is to say, about 1600. These plays have a character of their own. There is a sunlight in them, a ripeness, a genial exuberance of comedy not to be found in anything else that Shakespeare wrote. Like all the felicities of genius they have an air of happy casualty. Some blessed conjunction of time and temperament begot them. In their pages poetry, wit, and humour luxuriate in a happiness of union unparalleled in literature. They were written in the full summer of Shakespeare's mind, as *Love's Labour's Lost* was written in its spring.

Its place
in Shake-
speare's
life.

There would seem, indeed, to be some incongruity in putting *Twelfth Night* later than this date. It seems to disagree with what we can discover of the history of Shakespeare's mind. In 1600 he wrote *As You Like It*; in 1601 he wrote *Julius Caesar*; in 1602 he wrote *Hamlet*. That is to say, for eight years from

1601 Shakespeare wrote nothing that might not be described as tragedy. In the plays of these years there is indeed some comedy and some laughter, but there is no pure comedy and no pure laughter. It is never free. There is always a purpose in it. It is the great beauty of *As You Like It* and *Twelfth Night* that laughter has there no duties nor comedy any end but itself. If, therefore, there be anything in 'periods' (and Shakespeare's literary life has been divided into four in a way that would doubtless have surprised him, but that does correspond to something in his writings), *Twelfth Night* was written about the same time as *As You Like It*, and before *Julius Caesar* opened the grim roll of tragedies.

From these various indications we draw a conclusion. We conclude that of the three years to choose from the most probable is 1600. Conclusion
(1600).

THE TEXT

Twelfth Night had been on the stage for more than twenty years before it was printed. It was written, as we have seen, about 1600; it was first printed in 1623, in the edition known as the First Folio. First Folio
(1623). This was the first collected edition of Shakespeare's plays. It was prepared by two of his friends and fellow-actors, John Heminge and Henry Condell, as a memorial to his genius and good nature, and it contained twenty plays which had never appeared in print. We call it a Folio edition because of its folio size, to distinguish it from the various quarto editions of single plays (known simply as the Quartos) which came out from time to time. We call it the First Folio to distinguish it from the three other Folio editions which followed it in 1632, 1663, and 1685.

Since *Twelfth Night* is one of the twenty plays preserved by the First Folio, all that a modern editor has to do, if he wish to print a text of this play, is to reproduce, with such corrections as seem necessary, the text of the First Folio. There are, as it happens, few corrections to make. The version of the play which Heminge and Condell gave to the printers was a good version, and they had the sense to know it. They left well alone. The Language
of Play.

language of the play is fortunately easy, and does not lend itself to corruption. The poetry is for the most part smooth, and the prose of the comic dialogue racy and natural. The tricks of words and minutiae of custom which darken to us moderns so many pages of Shakespeare do not darken a page of *Twelfth Night*. There are difficulties, of course, but they do not impede our pleasure. We laugh, for the most part, without note or advice. Now it is a sad truth that too often (oftener certainly than he is inclined to confess) the modern reader of Shakespeare must turn to a commentator before he can be sure that he has a right to laugh at all.

Some Difficulties.

Given such a play, and a good version of it, the worst editor can do little harm. The one or two defective lines, such as I. v. 276 ('with adorations, fertile tears') and III. iii. 15 ('and thanks: and ever oft good turns'), are easily endured. Their meaning is plain; they are defective only in words. In the few places where editors have dislodged a word and substituted another of their own their successors have generally condemned their action and restored the innocent. The Folio, for example, reads 'sound' in I. i. 5. Obviously a mistake, said Pope, for 'south', and made the change. But this is impossible, as you may see in the note; and every one now reads 'sound'. 'With such estimable wonder' (II. i. 28) is a difficult phrase to us, though it cannot have been difficult to Shakespeare. Warburton, who feared no colours, marked it 'an interpolation of the players', an eighteenth-century phrase for anything which you thought beneath the dignity or ability of Shakespeare. 'Mercury endue thee with leasing,' says the Folio Clown to Olivia (I. v. 105). But 'leasing' means 'lying'. Let us therefore save a soul and read 'pleasing', said Warburton, who was afterwards a bishop. The best correction in the play was made by Theobald when he saw that 'coole my nature' of the Folio was a mistake for 'curl by nature' (I. iii. 107). It is a pity that neither he nor any one else has succeeded in explaining who 'the lady of the *Strachy*' (II. v. 45) can have been. *Starchy*, *Astrakhan*, *Sophy*, *Duchy*, *Tragedy*, *County* are some of the numerous proposals, and are

here mentioned only to illustrate the difficulty of the word Strachy, and the desperate courage of Shakespeare's critics.

It is a great merit of the Folio editors that they were actors, and knew what was what ; and not only actors, but actors in Shakespeare's company. They had played in *Twelfth Night*, and were familiar with its language long before they had a thought of editing anything. We owe a great deal to this. They knew what to leave alone. Among other things they knew the language of clowns. They had a professional ear for good nonsense. It is never safe to let the scientific editor work his will on the speech of clowns and fools. Nonsense and he are sworn enemies by contract ; for as it is the first qualification of an editor that he shall be sensible himself, so it is the first rule of his calling that he shall make sense of everything. It has seemed to me that the very gracious fooling of Feste, as we have it, for example, in II. iii. 24-31, is one of the best possible testimonies to the goodness of the original version and the faithfulness of its editors and printers. It might so easily have been mangled by some foolish wise man armed with authority and a pen.

Actor-
Editors
and Good
Nonsense.



TWELFTH-NIGHT; OR, WHAT YOU WILL

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

ORSINO, Duke of Illyria.
SEBASTIAN, Brother to Viola.
ANTONIO, a Sea Captain, Friend
to Sebastian.
A Sea Captain, Friend to Viola.
VALENTINE, } Gentlemen attend-
CURIO, } ing on the Duke.
SIR TOBY BELCH, Uncle to Olivia.
SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK.

MALVOLIO, Steward to Olivia.
FABIAN, } Servants to
FESTE, a Clown, } Olivia.
OLIVIA, a rich Countess.
VIOLA, in love with the Duke.
MARIA, Olivia's Woman.
Lords, Priests, Sailors, Officers,
Musicians, and other Attendants.

SCENE.—*A City in Illyria; and the Sea-coast near it.*

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Room in the DUKE'S Palace.*

Enter DUKE, CURIO, Lords; Musicians attending.

Duke. If music be the food of love, play on;
Give me excess of it, that, surfeiting,
The appetite may sicken, and so die.
That strain again! it had a dying fall:
O! it came o'er my ear like the sweet sound 5
That breathes upon a bank of violets,
Stealing and giving odour. Enough! no more:
'Tis not so sweet now as it was before.
O spirit of love! how quick and fresh art thou,
That, notwithstanding thy capacity 10
Receiveth as the sea, nought enters there,
Of what validity and pitch soe'er,
But falls into abatement and low price,
Even in a minute: so full of shapes is fancy,
That it alone is high fantastical. 15

Curio. Will you go hunt, my lord?

Duke.

What, Curio?

Curio. The hart.

Duke. Why, so I do, the noblest that I have.

O! when mine eyes did see Olivia first,

Methought she purg'd the air of pestilence. 20
 That instant was I turn'd into a hart,
 And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds,
 E'er since pursue me.

Enter VALENTINE.

How now ! what news from her ?

Valentine. So please my lord, I might not be admitted ;
 But from her handmaid do return this answer : 25
 The element itself, till seven years' heat,
 Shall not behold her face at ample view ;
 But, like a cloistress, she will veiled walk,
 And water once a day her chamber round
 With eye-offending brine : all this, to season 30
 A brother's dead love, which she would keep fresh
 And lasting in her sad remembrance.

Duke. O ! she that hath a heart of that fine frame
 To pay this debt of love but to a brother,
 How will she love, when the rich golden shaft 35
 Hath killed the flock of all affections else
 That live in her ; when liver, brain, and heart,
 These sovereign thrones, are all supplied, and fill'd
 Her sweet perfections with one self king.
 Away before me to sweet beds of flowers ; 40
 Love-thoughts lie rich when canopied with bowers.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.—*The Sea-coast.*

Enter VIOLA, Captain, and Sailors.

Viola. What country, friends, is this ?

Captain. This is Illyria, lady.

Viola. And what should I do in Illyria ?

My brother he is in Elysium.

Perchance he is not drown'd : what think you sailors ?

Captain. It is perchance that you yourself were sav'd. 5

Viola. O my poor brother ! and so perchance may he be.

Captain. True, madam : and, to comfort you with chance,
 Assure yourself, after our ship did split,
 When you and those poor number sav'd with you
 Hung on our driving boat, I saw your brother, 10
 Most provident in peril, bind himself,—
 Courage and hope both teaching him the practice,—
 To a strong mast that liv'd upon the sea ;
 Where, like Arion on the dolphin's back,

I saw him hold acquaintance with the waves
So long as I could see. 15

Viola. For saying so there's gold.
Mine own escape unfoldeth to my hope,
Whereto thy speech serves for authority,
The like of him. Know'st thou this country ?

Captain. Ay, madam, well ; for I was bred and born 20
Not three hours' travel from this very place.

Viola. Who governs here ?

Captain. A noble duke, in nature as in name.

Viola. What is his name ?

Captain. Orsino. 25

Viola. Orsino ! I have heard my father name him :
He was a bachelor then.

Captain. And so is now, or was so very late ;
For but a month ago I went from hence,
And then 'twas fresh in murmur,—as, you know, 30
What great ones do the less will prattle of,—
That he did seek the love of fair Olivia.

Viola. What's she ?

Captain. A virtuous maid, the daughter of a count
That died some twelvemonth since ; then leaving her 35
In the protection of his son, her brother,
Who shortly also died : for whose dear love,
They say she hath abjur'd the company
And sight of men.

Viola. O ! that I serv'd that lady,
And might not be deliver'd to the world, 40
Till I had made mine own occasion mellow,
What my estate is.

Captain. That were hard to compass,
Because she will admit no kind of suit,
No, not the duke's.

Viola. There is a fair behaviour in thee, captain ; 45
And though that nature with a beauteous wall
Doth oft close in pollution, yet of thee
I will believe thou hast a mind that suits
With this thy fair and outward character.
I prithee,—and I'll pay thee bounteously,— 50
Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
For such disguise as haply shall become
The form of my intent. I'll serve this duke :
It may be worth thy pains ; for I can sing 55
And speak to him in many sorts of music

That will allow me very worth his service.
 What else may hap to time I will commit ;
 Only shape thou thy silence to my wit.

Captain. When my tongue blabs, then let mine eyes not
 see. 60

Viola. I thank thee : lead me on. [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*A Room in OLIVIA'S House.*

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA.

Sir Toby. What a plague means my niece, to take the death of her brother thus ? I am sure care's an enemy to life.

Maria. By my troth, Sir Toby, you must come in earlier o' nights : your cousin, my lady, takes great exceptions to your ill hours. 5

Sir Toby. Why, let her except before excepted.

Maria. Ay, but you must confine yourself within the modest limits of order.

Sir Toby. Confine ! I'll confine myself no finer than I am. These clothes are good enough to drink in, and so be these boots too : an they be not, let them hang themselves in their own straps. 10

Maria. That quaffing and drinking will undo you : I heard my lady talk of it yesterday ; and of a foolish knight that you brought in one night here to be her wooer. 15

Sir Toby. Who ? Sir Andrew Aguecheek ?

Maria. Ay, he. 20

Sir Toby. He's as tall a man as any's in Illyria.

Maria. What's that to the purpose ?

Sir Toby. Why, he has three thousand ducats a year.

Maria. Ay, but he'll have but a year in all these ducats : he's a very fool and a prodigal. 25

Sir Toby. Fie, that you'll say so ! he plays o' the viol-de-gamboys, and speaks three or four languages word for word without book, and hath all the good gifts of nature. 30

Maria. He hath indeed, almost natural ; for, besides that he's a fool, he's a great quarreller ; and but that he hath the gift of a coward to allay the gust he hath in quarrelling, 'tis thought among the prudent he would quickly have the gift of a grave. 35

Sir Toby. By this hand, they are scoundrels and sub-tractors that say so of him. Who are they ?

Maria. They that add, moreover, he's drunk nightly
in your company. 40

Sir Toby. With drinking healths to my niece. I'll
drink to her as long as there is a passage in my throat and
drink in Illyria. He's a coward and a coystril, that will
not drink to my niece till his brains turn o' the toe like 45
a parish-top. What, wench! *Castiliano vulgo!* for here
comes Sir Andrew Agueface.

Enter SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK.

Sir Andrew. Sir Toby Belch! how now, Sir Toby
Belch! 50

Sir Toby. Sweet Sir Andrew! 50

Sir Andrew. Bless you, fair shrew.

Maria. And you too, sir.

Sir Toby. Accost, Sir Andrew, accost.

Sir Andrew. What's that?

Sir Toby. My niece's chambermaid. 55

Sir Andrew. Good Mistress Accost, I desire better
acquaintance.

Maria. My name is Mary, sir.

Sir Andrew. Good Mistress Mary Accost,—

Sir Toby. You mistake, knight: 'accost' is, front
her, board her, woo her, assail her. 60

Sir Andrew. By my troth, I would not undertake her
in this company. Is that the meaning of 'accost'?

Maria. Fare you well, gentlemen. 65

Sir Toby. An thou let her part so, Sir Andrew, would
thou mightst never draw sword again!

Sir Andrew. An you part so, mistress, I would I might
never draw sword again. Fair lady, do you think you 70
have fools in hand?

Maria. Sir, I have not you by the hand.

Sir Andrew. Marry, but you shall have; and here's
my hand.

Maria. Now, sir, 'thought is free': I pray you, bring 75
your hand to the buttery-bar and let it drink.

Sir Andrew. Wherefore, sweetheart? what's your
metaphor?

Maria. It's dry, sir.

Sir Andrew. Why, I think so: I am not such an ass 80
but I can keep my hand dry. But what's your jest?

Maria. A dry jest, sir.

Sir Andrew. Are you full of them?

Maria. Ay, sir, I have them at my fingers' ends : 85
marry, now I let go your hand, I am barren. [*Exit.*]

Sir Toby. O knight ! thou lackest a cup of canary :
when did I see thee so put down ?

Sir Andrew. Never in your life, I think ; unless you 90
see canary put me down. Methinks sometimes I have no
more wit than a Christian or an ordinary man has ; but
I am a great eater of beef, and I believe that does harm to
my wit.

Sir Toby. No question.

Sir Andrew. An I thought that, I'd forswear it. I'll 95
ride home to-morrow, Sir Toby.

Sir Toby. *Pourquoi*, my dear knight ?

Sir Andrew. What is '*pourquoi*?' do or not do ?
I would I had bestowed that time in the tongues that I 100
have in fencing, dancing, and bear-baiting. O ! had I but
followed the arts !

Sir Toby. Then hadst thou had an excellent head of
hair. 105

Sir Andrew. Why, would that have mended my hair ?

Sir Toby. Past question ; for thou seest it will not curl
by nature.

Sir Andrew. But it becomes me well enough, does't
not ?

Sir Toby. Excellent ; it hangs like flax on a distaff. 110

Sir Andrew. Faith, I'll home to-morrow, Sir Toby :
your niece will not be seen ; or if she be, it's four to one 115
she'll none of me. The count himself here hard by woos
her.

Sir Toby. She'll none o' the count ; she'll not match
above her degree, neither in estate, years, nor wit ; I have
heard her swear it. Tut, there's life in't, man. 120

Sir Andrew. I'll stay a month longer. I am a fellow
o' the strangest mind i' the world ; I delight in masques
and revels sometimes altogether.

Sir Toby. Art thou good at these kickchawses, knight ? 125

Sir Andrew. As any man in Illyria, whatsoever he be,
under the degree of my betters : and yet I will not com-
pare with an old man.

Sir Toby. What is thy excellence in a galliard, knight ? 130

Sir Andrew. Faith, I can cut a caper.

Sir Toby. And I can cut the mutton to't.

Sir Andrew. And I think I have the back-trick simply
as strong as any man in Illyria.

Sir Toby. Wherefore are these things hid ? wherefore 135
have these gifts a curtain before 'em ? are they like to take
dust, like Mistress Mall's picture ? why dost thou not go
to church in a galliard, and come home in a coranto ? My
very walk should be a jig. What dost thou mean ? is it 140
a world to hide virtues in ? I did think, by the excellent
constitution of thy leg, it was formed under the star of
a galliard.

Sir Andrew. Ay, 'tis strong, and it does indifferent 145
well in a flame-coloured stock. Shall we set about some
revels ?

Sir Toby. What shall we do else ? were we not born
under Taurus ?

Sir Andrew. Taurus ! that's sides and heart. 150

Sir Toby. No, sir, it is legs and thighs. Let me see
thee caper. Ha ! higher : ha, ha ! excellent ! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Room in the DUKE'S Palace.*

Enter VALENTINE, and VIOLA in man's attire.

Valentine. If the duke continue these favours towards
you, Cesario, you are like to be much advanced he hath
known you but three days, and already you are no stranger.

Viola. You either fear his humour or my negligence, 5
that you call in question the continuance of his love. Is
he inconstant, sir, in his favours ?

Valentine. No, believe me.

Viola. I thank you. Here comes the count.

Enter DUKE, CURIO, and Attendants.

Duke. Who saw Cesario ? ho ! 10

Viola. On your attendance, my lord ; here.

Duke. Stand you awhile aloof. Cesario,
Thou know'st no less but all ; I have unclasp'd
To thee the book even of my secret soul :
Therefore, good youth, address thy gait unto her, 15
Be not denied access, stand at her doors,
And tell them, there thy fixed foot shall grow
Till thou have audience.

Viola. Sure, my noble lord,
If she be so abandoned to her sorrow
As it is spoke, she never will admit me. 20

Duke. Be clamorous and leap all civil bounds
Rather than make unprofited return.

Viola. Say I do speak with her, my lord, what then ?

Duke. O ! then unfold the passion of my love ;
 Surprise her with discourse of my dear faith : 25
 It shall become thee well to act my woes ;
 She will attend it better in thy youth
 Than in a nuncio of more grave aspect.

Viola. I think not so, my lord.

Duke. Dear lad, believe it ;
 For they shall yet belie thy happy years 30
 That say thou art a man : Diana's lip
 Is not more smooth and rubious ; thy small pipe
 Is as the maiden's organ, shrill and sound ;
 And all is semblative a woman's part.
 I know thy constellation is right apt 35
 For this affair. Some four or five attend him ;
 All, if you will ; for I myself am best
 When least in company. Prosper well in this,
 And thou shalt live as freely as thy lord,
 To call his fortunes thine.

Viola. I'll do my best 40
 To woo your lady : [*Aside*] yet, a barful strife !
 Whoe'er I woo, myself would be his wife. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE V.—*A Room in OLIVIA's House.*

Enter MARIA and Clown.

Maria. Nay, either tell me where thou hast been, or
 I will not open my lips so wide as a bristle may enter in
 way of thy excuse. My lady will hang thee for thy
 absence.

Clown. Let her hang me : he that is well hanged in 5
 this world needs to fear no colours.

Maria. Make that good.

Clown. He shall see none to fear.

Maria. A good lenten answer : I can tell thee where 10
 that saying was born, of, ' I fear no colours.'

Clown. Where, good Mistress Mary ?

Maria. In the wars ; and that may you be bold to say
 in your foolery.

Clown. Well, God give them wisdom that have it ; and 15
 those that are fools, let them use their talents.

Maria. Yet you will be hanged for being so long
 absent ; or, to be turned away, is not that as good as
 a hanging to you ?

Clown. Many a good hanging prevents a bad marriage ; 20
and, for turning away, let summer bear it out.

Maria. You are resolute then ?

Clown. Not so, neither ; but I am resolved on two 25
points.

Maria. That if one break, the other will hold ; or, if
both break, your gaskins fall.

Clown. Apt, in good faith ; very apt. Well, go thy 30
way : if Sir Toby would leave drinking, thou wert as witty
a piece of Eve's flesh as any in Illyria.

Maria. Peace, you rogue, no more o' that. Here
comes my lady : make your excuse wisely, you were
best. [Exit.

Clown. Wit, an't be thy will, put me into good fooling ! 35
Those wits that think they have thee, do very oft prove
fools ; and I, that am sure I lack thee, may pass for a wise
man : for what says Quinapalus ? ' Better a witty fool
than a foolish wit.'

Enter OLIVIA with MALVOLIO.

God bless thee, lady ! 40

Olivia. Take the fool away.

Clown. Do you not hear, fellows ? Take away the lady.

Olivia. Go to, you're a dry fool ; I'll no more of you : 45
besides, you grow dishonest.

Clown. Two faults, madonna, that drink and good 50
counsel will amend : for give the dry fool drink, then is
the fool not dry : bid the dishonest man mend himself :
if he mend, he is no longer dishonest ; if he cannot, let the
botcher mend him. Any thing that's mended is but
patched : virtue that transgresses is but patched with sin ;
and sin that amends is but patched with virtue. If that
this simple syllogism will serve, so ; if it will not, what 55
remedy ? As there is no true cuckold but calamity, so
beauty's a flower. The lady bade take away the fool ;
therefore, I say again, take her away.

Olivia. Sir, I bade them take away you.

Clown. Misprision in the highest degree ! Lady, 60
cucullus non facit monachum ; that's as much to say as
I wear not motley in my brain. Good madonna, give me
leave to prove you a fool.

Olivia. Can you do it ?

Clown. Dexteriously, good madonna.

Olivia. Make your proof. 65

Clown. I must catechise you for it, madonna : good my mouse of virtue, answer me.

Olivia. Well, sir, for want of other idleness, I'll bide your proof. 70

Clown. Good madonna, why mournest thou ?

Olivia. Good fool, for my brother's death.

Clown. I think his soul is in hell, madonna.

Olivia. I know his soul is in heaven, fool.

Clown. The more fool, madonna, to mourn for your brother's soul being in heaven. Take away the fool, gentlemen. 75

Olivia. What think you of this fool, Malvolio ? doth he not mend ?

Malvolio. Yes ; and shall do, till the pangs of death shake him : infirmity, that decays the wise, doth ever make the better fool. 80

Clown. God send you, sir, a speedy infirmity, for the better increasing your folly ! Sir Toby will be sworn that I am no fox, but he will not pass his word for two pence that you are no fool. 85

Olivia. How say you to that, Malvolio ?

Malvolio. I marvel your ladyship takes delight in such a barren rascal : I saw him put down the other day with an ordinary fool that has no more brain than a stone. Look you now, he's out of his guard already ; unless you laugh and minister occasion to him, he is gagged. I protest, I take these wise men, that crow so at these set kind of fools, no better than the fools' zanies. 90 95

Olivia. O ! you are sick of self-love, Malvolio, and taste with a distempered appetite. To be generous, guiltless, and of free disposition, is to take those things for bird-bolts that you deem cannon-bullets. There is no slander in an allowed fool, though he do nothing but rail ; nor no railing in a known discreet man, though he do nothing but reprove. 100

Clown. Now, Mercury endue thee with leasing, for thou speakest well of fools ! 105

Re-enter MARIA.

Maria. Madam, there is at the gate a young gentleman much desires to speak with you.

Olivia. From the Count Orsino, is it ?

Maria. I know not, madam : 'tis a fair young man, and well attended. 110

Olivia. Who of my people hold him in delay ?

Maria. Sir Toby, madam, your kinsman.

Olivia. Fetch him off, I pray you : he speaks nothing but madman. Fie on him ! [*Exit MARIA.*] Go you, 115
Malvolio : if it be a suit from the count, I am sick, or not at home : what you will, to dismiss it. [*Exit MALVOLIO.*] Now you see, sir, how your fooling grows old, and people dislike it.

Clown. Thou hast spoken for us, madonna, as if thy 120
 eldest son should be a fool : whose skull Jove cram with brains ! for here comes one of thy kin has a most weak *pia mater*.

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH.

Olivia. By mine honour, half drunk. What is he at the gate, cousin ?

Sir Toby. A gentleman. 125

Olivia. A gentleman ! what gentleman ?

Sir Toby. 'Tis a gentleman here,—a plague o' these pickle herring ! How now, sot !

Clown. Good Sir Toby.

Olivia. Cousin, cousin, how have you come so early 130
 by this lethargy ?

Sir Toby. Lechery ! I defy lechery ! There's one at the gate.

Clown. Ay, marry, what is he ?

Sir Toby. Let him be the devil, an he will, I care not : 135
 give me faith, say I. Well, it's all one. [*Exit.*]

Olivia. What's a drunken man like, fool ?

Clown. Like a drowned man, a fool, and a madman : 140
 one draught above heat makes him a fool, the second mads him, and a third drowns him.

Olivia. Go thou and seek the crowner, and let him sit o' my coz ; for he's in the third degree of drink, he's drowned : go, look after him.

Clown. He is but mad yet, madonna ; and the fool 145
 shall look to the madman. [*Exit.*]

Re-enter MALVOLIO

Malvolio. Madam, yond young fellow swears he will speak with you. I told him you were sick : he takes on him to understand so much, and therefore comes to speak 150
 with you. I told him you were asleep : he seems to have a foreknowledge of that too, and therefore comes to speak

with you. What is to be said to him, lady ? he's fortified against any denial.

Olivia. Tell him he shall not speak with me. 155

Malvolio. Ha's been told so ; and he says, he'll stand at your door like a sheriff's post, and be the supporter to a bench, but he'll speak with you.

Olivia. What kind o' man is he ? 160

Malvolio. Why, of mankind.

Olivia. What manner of man ?

Malvolio. Of very ill manner : he'll speak with you, will you or no.

Olivia. Of what personage and years is he ? 165

Malvolio. Not yet old enough for a man, nor young enough for a boy ; as a squash is before 'tis a peascod, or a codling when 'tis almost an apple : 'tis with him in standing water, between boy and man. He is very well-favoured, and he speaks very shrewishly : one would think his mother's milk were scarce out of him. 170

Olivia. Let him approach. Call in my gentlewoman.

Malvolio. Gentlewoman, my lady calls. [*Exit.*] 175

Re-enter MARIA.

Olivia. Give me my veil : come, throw it o'er my face. We'll once more hear Orsino's embassy.

Enter VIOLA and Attendants.

Viola. The honourable lady of the house, which is she ?

Olivia. Speak to me ; I shall answer for her. Your will ? 180

Viola. Most radiant, exquisite, and unmatchable beauty,—I pray you tell me if this be the lady of the house, for I never saw her : I would be loath to cast away my speech ; for, besides that it is excellently well penned, I have taken great pains to con it. Good beauties, let me sustain no scorn ; I am very comptible, even to the least sinister usage. 185

Olivia. Whence came you, sir ? 190

Viola. I can say little more than I have studied, and that question's out of my part. Good gentle one, give me modest assurance if you be the lady of the house, that I may proceed in my speech.

Olivia. Are you a comedian ? 195

Viola. No, my profound heart ; and yet, by the very fangs of malice I swear I am not that I play. Are you the lady of the house ?

Olivia. If I do not usurp myself, I am.

Viola. Most certain, if you are she, you do usurp 200
yourself ; for, what is yours to bestow is not yours to
reserve. But this is from my commission : I will on with
my speech in your praise, and then show you the heart of
my message.

Olivia. Come to what is important in 't : I forgive you 205
the praise.

Viola. Alas ! I took great pains to study it, and 'tis
poetical.

Olivia. It is the more like to be feigned : I pray you 210
keep it in. I heard you were saucy at my gates, and
allowed your approach rather to wonder at you than to
hear you. If you be not mad, be gone ; if you have
reason, be brief : 'tis not that time of moon with me to
make one in so skipping a dialogue. 215

Maria. Will you hoist sail, sir ? here lies your way.

Viola. No, good swabber ; I am to hull here a little
longer. Some mollification for your giant, sweet lady.

Olivia. Tell me your mind. 220

Viola. I am a messenger.

Olivia. Sure, you have some hideous matter to deliver,
when the courtesy of it is so fearful. Speak your office.

Viola. It alone concerns your ear. I bring no over- 225
ture of war, no taxation of homage : I hold the olive in
my hand ; my words are as full of peace as matter.

Olivia. Yet you began rudely. What are you ? what 230
would you ?

Viola. The rudeness that hath appear'd in me have
I learn'd from my entertainment. What I am, and what
I would, are as secret as maidenhead ; to your ears,
divinity ; to any other's, profanation. 235

Olivia. Give us the place alone : we will hear this
divinity. [*Exit MARIA and Attendants.*] Now, sir ; what
is your text ?

Viola. Most sweet lady,—

Olivia. A comfortable doctrine, and much may be said 240
of it. Where lies your text ?

Viola. In Orsino's bosom.

Olivia. In his bosom ! In what chapter of his bosom ?

Viola. To answer by the method, in the first of his 245
heart.

Olivia. O ! I have read it : it is heresy. Have you no
more to say ?

Viola. Good madam, let me see your face.

Olivia. Have you any commission from your lord to negotiate with my face ? you are now out of your text : but we will draw the curtain and show you the picture. [*Unveiling.*] Look you, sir, such a one I was as this present : is 't not well done ? 250 255

Viola. Excellently done, if God did all.

Olivia. 'Tis in grain, sir ; 'twill endure wind and weather.

Viola. 'Tis beauty truly blent, whose red and white Nature's own sweet and cunning hand laid on : Lady, you are the cruell'st she alive, If you will lead these graces to the grave And leave the world no copy. 260

Olivia. O ! sir, I will not be so hard-hearted ; I will give out divers schedules of my beauty : it shall be inventoried, and every particle and utensil labelled to my will : as *Item*, Two lips, indifferent red ; *Item*, Two grey eyes, with lids to them ; *Item*, One neck, one chin, and so forth. Were you sent hither to praise me ? 265 270

Viola. I see you what you are : you are too proud ; But, if you were the devil, you are fair. My lord and master loves you : O ! such love Could be but recompens'd, though you were crown'd The nonpareil of beauty.

Olivia. How does he love me ? 275

Viola. With adorations, with fertile tears, With groans that thunder love, with sighs of fire.

Olivia. Your lord does know my mind ; I cannot love him ; Yet I suppose him virtuous, know him noble, Of great estate, of fresh and stainless youth ; In voices well divulg'd, free, learn'd, and valiant ; And, in dimension and the shape of nature A gracious person ; but yet I cannot love him : He might have took his answer long ago. 280

Viola. If I did love you in my master's flame, With such a suffering, such a deadly life, In your denial I would find no sense ; I would not understand it. 285

Olivia. Why, what would you ?

Viola. Make me a willow cabin at your gate, And call upon my soul within the house ; Write loyal cantons of contemned love, And sing them loud even in the dead of night ; 290

Holla your name to the reverberate hills,
 And make the babbling gossip of the air
 Cry out, 'Olivia!' O! you should not rest 295
 Between the elements of air and earth,
 But you should pity me!

Olivia. You might do much. What is your parentage?

Viola. Above my fortune, yet my state is well:
 I am a gentleman.

Olivia. Get you to your lord: 300
 I cannot love him. Let him send no more,
 Unless, perchance, you come to me again,
 To tell me how he takes it. Fare you well:
 I thank you for your pains: spend this for me.

Viola. I am no fee'd post, lady; keep your purse: 305
 My master, not myself, lacks recompense.
 Love make his heart of flint that you shall love,
 And let your fervour, like my master's, be
 Plac'd in contempt! Farewell, fair cruelty. [*Exit.*

Olivia. 'What is your parentage?' 310
 'Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:
 I am a gentleman.' I'll be sworn thou art:
 Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions, and spirit,
 Do give thee five-fold blazon. Not too fast: soft! soft!
 Unless the master were the man. How now! 315
 Even so quickly may one catch the plague?
 Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
 With an invisible and subtle stealth
 To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be.
 What, ho! Malvolio!

Re-enter MALVOLIO.

Malvolio. Here, madam, at your service. 320

Olivia. Run after that same peevish messenger,
 The county's man: he left this ring behind him,
 Would I, or not: tell him I'll none of it.
 Desire him not to flatter with his lord,
 Nor hold him up with hopes: I'm not for him. 325
 If that the youth will come this way to-morrow,
 I'll give him reasons for't. Hie thee, Malvolio.

Malvolio. Madam, I will. [*Exit.*

Olivia. I do I know not what, and fear to find
 Mine eye too great a flatterer for my mind. 330
 Fate, show thy force: ourselves we do not owe:
 What is decreed must be, and be this so! [*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Sea-coast.*

Enter ANTONIO and SEBASTIAN.

Antonio. Will you stay no longer ? nor will you not that I go with you ?

Sebastian. By your patience, no. My stars shine darkly over me ; the malignancy of my fate might, perhaps, distemper yours ; therefore I shall crave of you your leave that I may bear my evils alone. It were a bad recompense for your love to lay any of them on you. 5

Antonio. Let me yet know of you whither you are bound. 10

Sebastian. No, sooth, sir : my determinate voyage is mere extravagancy. But I perceive in you so excellent a touch of modesty that you will not extort from me what I am willing to keep in ; therefore, it charges me in manners the rather to express myself. You must know of me then, Antonio, my name is Sebastian, which I called Roderigo. My father was that Sebastian of Messaline, whom I know you have heard of. He left behind him myself and a sister, both born in an hour : if the heavens had been pleased, would we had so ended ! but you, sir, altered that ; for some hour before you took me from the breach of the sea was my sister drowned. 20

Antonio. Alas the day ! 25

Sebastian. A lady, sir, though it was said she much resembled me, was yet of many accounted beautiful : but, though I could not with such estimable wonder overfar believe that, yet thus far I will boldly publish her : she bore a mind that envy could not but call fair. She is drowned already, sir, with salt water, though I seem to drown her remembrance again with more. 30

Antonio. Pardon me, sir, your bad entertainment.

Sebastian. O good Antonio ! forgive me your trouble ! 35

Antonio. If you will not murder me for my love, let me be your servant.

Sebastian. If you will not undo what you have done, that is, kill him whom you have recovered, desire it not. Fare ye well at once : my bosom is full of kindness ; and I am yet so near the manners of my mother, that upon the least occasion more mine eyes will tell tales of me. I am bound to the Count Orsino's court : farewell. 40
[Exit. 45

Antonio. The gentleness of all the gods go with thee !
 I have many enemies in Orsino's court,
 Else would I very shortly see thee there ;
 But, come what may, I do adore thee so, 50
 That danger shall seem sport, and I will go. [*Exit.*]

SCENE II.—*A Street.*

Enter VIOLA ; MALVOLIO following.

Malvolio. Were not you even now with the Countess Olivia ?

Viola. Even now, sir : on a moderate pace I have since arrived but hither.

Malvolio. She returns this ring to you, sir : you might 5
 have saved me my pains, to have taken it away yourself.
 She adds, moreover, that you should put your lord into
 a desperate assurance she will none of him. And one
 thing more ; that you be never so hardy to come again in 10
 his affairs, unless it be to report your lord's taking of this.
 Receive it so.

Viola. She took the ring of me ; I'll none of it.

Malvolio. Come, sir, you peevishly threw it to her ; 15
 and her will is it should be so returned : if it be worth
 stooping for, there it lies in your eye ; if not, be it his that
 finds it. [*Exit.*]

Viola. I left no ring with her : what means this lady ?
 Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her !
 She made good view of me ; indeed, so much, 20
 That sure methought her eyes had lost her tongue,
 For she did speak in starts distractedly.
 She loves me, sure ; the cunning of her passion
 Invites me in this churlish messenger.
 None of my lord's ring ! why, he sent her none. 25
 I am the man : if it be so, as 'tis,
 Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
 Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,
 Wherein the pregnant enemy does much.
 How easy is it for the proper-false 30
 In women's waxen hearts to set their forms !
 Alas ! our frailty is the cause, not we !
 For such as we are made of, such we be.
 How will this fadge ? My master loves her dearly ;
 And I, poor monster, fond as much on him ; 35
 And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.

What will become of this ? As I am man,
 My state is desperate for my master's love ;
 As I am woman,—now alas the day !—
 What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe ! 40
 O time ! thou must untangle this, not I ;
 It is too hard a knot for me to untie. [Exit.

SCENE III.—*A Room in OLIVIA'S House.*

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK.

Sir Toby. Approach, Sir Andrew : not to be a-bed after midnight is to be up betimes ; and *diluculo surgere*, thou knowest,—

Sir Andrew. Nay, by my troth, I know not ; but I know, to be up late is to be up late. 5

Sir Toby. A false conclusion : I hate it as an unfilled can. To be up after midnight and to go to bed then, is early ; so that to go to bed after midnight is to go to bed betimes. Does not our life consist of the four elements ? 10

Sir Andrew. Faith, so they say ; but, I think, it rather consists of eating and drinking.

Sir Toby. Thou art a scholar ; let us therefore eat and drink. Marian, I say ! a stoup of wine !

Enter Clown.

Sir Andrew. Here comes the fool, i' faith. 15

Clown. How now, my hearts ! Did you never see the picture of ' we three ? '

Sir Toby. Welcome, ass. Now let's have a catch.

Sir Andrew. By my troth, the fool has an excellent breast. I had rather than forty shillings I had such a leg, and so sweet a breath to sing, as the fool has. In sooth, thou wast in very gracious fooling last night, when thou spokest of Pigrogromitus, of the Vapians passing the equinoctial of Queubus : 'twas very good, i' faith. I sent thee sixpence for thy leman : hadst it ? 20 25

Clown. I did impetico thy gratillity ; for Malvolio's nose is no whipstock : my lady has a white hand, and the Myrmidons are no bottle-ale houses. 30

Sir Andrew. Excellent ! Why, this is the best fooling, when all is done. Now, a song.

Sir Toby. Come on ; there is sixpence for you : let's have a song. 35

Sir Andrew. There's a testril of me too : if one knight give a—

Clown. Would you have a love-song, or a song of good life ?

Sir Toby. A love-song, a love-song. 40

Sir Andrew. Ay, ay ; I care not for good life.

Clown. O mistress mine ! where are you roaming ?
O ! stay and hear ; your true love's coming,
That can sing both high and low.
Trip no further, pretty sweeting ; 45
Journeys end in lovers meeting,
Every wise man's son doth know.

Sir Andrew. Excellent good, i' faith.

Sir Toby. Good, good.

Clown. What is love ? 'tis not hereafter ; 50
Present mirth hath present laughter ;
What's to come is still unsure :
In delay there lies no plenty ;
Then come kiss me, sweet and twenty,
Youth's a stuff will not endure. 55

Sir Andrew. A mellifluous voice, as I am true knight.

Sir Toby. A contagious breath.

Sir Andrew. Very sweet and contagious, i' faith.

Sir Toby. To hear by the nose, it is dulcet in contagion. 60
But shall we make the welkin dance indeed ? Shall we
rouse the night-owl in a catch that will draw three souls
out of one weaver ? shall we do that ?

Sir Andrew. An you love me, let's do 't : I am dog at 65
a catch.

Clown. By'r lady, sir, and some dogs will catch well.

Sir Andrew. Most certain. Let our catch be, ' Thou 70
knave.'

Clown. ' Hold thy peace, thou knave,' knight ? I shall
be constrain'd in 't to call thee knave, knight.

Sir Andrew. 'Tis not the first time I have constrained 75
one to call me knave. Begin, fool : it begins, ' Hold thy
peace.'

Clown. I shall never begin if I hold my peace.

Sir Andrew. Good, i' faith. Come, begin.

[*They sing a catch.*]

Enter MARIA.

Maria. What a caterwauling do you keep here ! If my 80
lady have not called up her steward Malvolio and bid him
turn you out of doors, never trust me.

Sir Toby. My lady's a Cataian ; we are politicians ;
 Malvolio's a Peg-a-Ramsey, and ' Three merry men be we.' 85
 Am not I consanguineous ? am I not of her blood ?
 Tillyvally, lady !

There dwelt a man in Babylon, lady, lady !

Clown. Beshrew me, the knight's in admirable fooling.

Sir Andrew. Ay, he does well enough if he be disposed, 90
 and so do I too : he does it with a better grace, but I do it
 more natural.

Sir Toby. O ! the twelfth day of December,—

Maria. For the love o' God, peace !

Enter MALVOLIO.

Malvolio. My masters, are you mad ? or what are you ? 95
 Have you no wit, manners, nor honesty, but to gabble like
 tinkers at this time of night ? Do ye make an alehouse
 of my lady's house, that ye squeak out your coziers'
 catches without any mitigation or remorse of voice ? Is 100
 there no respect of place, persons, nor time, in you ?

Sir Toby. We did keep time, sir, in our catches. Sneek
 up !

Malvolio. Sir Toby, I must be round with you. My 105
 lady bade me tell you, that, though she harbours you as
 her kinsman, she's nothing allied to your disorders. If
 you can separate yourself and your misdemeanours, you
 are welcome to the house ; if not, an it would please
 you to take leave of her, she is very willing to bid you 110
 farewell.

Sir Toby. Farewell, dear heart, since I must needs be gone.

Maria. Nay, good Sir Toby.

Clown. His eyes do show his days are almost done.

Malvolio. Is 't even so ? 115

Sir Toby. But I will never die.

Clown. Sir Toby, there you lie.

Malvolio. This is much credit to you.

Sir Toby. Shall I bid him go ?

Clown. What an if you do ? 120

Sir Toby. Shall I bid him go, and spare not ?

Clown. O ! no, no, no, no, you dare not.

Sir Toby. ' Out o' time ! ' Sir, ye lie. Art any more
 than a steward ? Dost thou think, because thou art vir- 125
 tuous, there shall be no more cakes and ale ?

Clown. Yes, by Saint Anne ; and ginger shall be hot
 i' the mouth too.

Sir Toby. Thou'rt i' the right. Go, sir, rub your chain
with crumbs. A stoup of wine, Maria! 130

Malvolio. Mistress Mary, if you prized my lady's favour
at anything more than contempt, you would not give
means for this uncivil rule : she shall know of it, by this
hand. [Exit. 135

Maria. Go shake your ears.

Sir Andrew. Twere as good a deed as to drink when
a man's a-hungry, to challenge him the field, and then to
break promise with him and make a fool of him.

Sir Toby. Do 't, knight : I'll write thee a challenge ;
or I'll deliver thy indignation to him by word of mouth. 140

Maria. Sweet Sir Toby, be patient for to-night : since
the youth of the count's was to-day with my lady, she is
much out of quiet. For Monsieur Malvolio, let me alone
with him : if I do not gull him into a nayword, and make
him a common recreation, do not think I have wit enough
to lie straight in my bed. I know I can do it. 145 150

Sir Toby. Possess us, possess us ; tell us something of
him.

Maria. Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of puritan.

Sir Andrew. O ! if I thought that, I'd beat him like
a dog. 155

Sir Toby. What, for being a puritan ? thy exquisite
reason, dear knight ?

Sir Andrew. I have no exquisite reason for 't, but I have
reason good enough. 160

Maria. The devil a puritan that he is, or anything con-
stantly but a time-pleaser ; an affectioned ass, that cons-
state without book, and utters it by great swarths : the
best persuaded of himself ; so crammed, as he thinks,
with excellences, that it is his ground of faith that all that
look on him love him ; and on that vice in him will my
revenge find notable cause to work. 165

Sir Toby. What wilt thou do ? 170

Maria. I will drop in his way some obscure epistles of
love ; wherein, by the colour of his beard, the shape of his
leg, the manner of his gait, the expressure of his eye, fore-
head, and complexion, he shall find himself most feelingly
personated. I can write very like my lady your niece ;
on a forgotten matter we can hardly make distinction of
our hands. 175

Sir Toby. Excellent ! I smell a device.

Sir Andrew. I have 't in my nose too. 180

Sir Toby. He shall think, by the letters that thou wilt drop, that they come from my niece, and that she is in love with him.

Maria. My purpose is, indeed, a horse of that colour. 185

Sir Andrew. And your horse now would make him an ass.

Maria. Ass, I doubt not.

Sir Andrew. O ! 'twill be admirable.

Maria. Sport royal, I warrant you : I know my physic 190
will work with him. I will plant you two, and let the fool make a third, where he shall find the letter : observe his construction of it. For this night, to bed, and dream on the event. Farewell. [Exit. 195

Sir Toby. Good night, Penthesilea.

Sir Andrew. Before me, she's a good wench.

Sir Toby. She's a beagle, true-bred, and one that adores me : what o' that ?

Sir Andrew. I was adored once too. 200

Sir Toby. Let's to bed, knight. Thou hadst need send for more money.

Sir Andrew. If I cannot recover your niece, I am a foul way out.

Sir Toby. Send for money, knight : if thou hast her 205
not i' the end, call me cut.

Sir Andrew. If I do not, never trust me, take it how you will.

Sir Toby. Come, come : I'll go burn some sack ; 'tis 210
too late to go to bed now. Come, knight ; come, knight.
[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.—*A Room in the DUKE's Palace.*

Enter DUKE, VIOLA, CURIO, and Others.

Duke. Give me some music. Now, good morrow, friends :
Now, good Cesario, but that piece of song,
That old and antique song we heard last night ;
Methought it did relieve my passion much,
More than light airs and recollected terms 5
Of these most brisk and giddy-paced times :
Come ; but one verse.

Curio. He is not here, so please your lordship, that should sing it.

Duke. Who was it ? 10

Curio. Feste, the jester, my lord ; a fool that the Lady

Olivia's father took much delight in. He is about the house.

Duke. Seek him out, and play the tune the while.

[*Exit* CURIO. *Music.*

Come hither, boy : if ever thou shalt love, 15

In the sweet pangs of it remember me ;

For such as I am all true lovers are :

Unstaid and skittish in all motions else

Save in the constant image of the creature

That is belov'd. How dost thou like this tune ? 20

Viola. It gives a very echo to the seat

Where love is thron'd.

Duke. Thou dost speak masterly.

My life upon 't, young though thou art, thine eye

Hath stay'd upon some favour that it loves ;

Hath it not, boy ?

Viola. A little, by your favour. 25

Duke. What kind of woman is 't ?

Viola. Of your complexion.

Duke. She is not worth thee, then. What years, i' faith ?

Viola. About your years, my lord.

Duke. Too old, by heaven. Let still the woman take
An elder than herself, so wears she to him, 30

So sways she level in her husband's heart :

For, boy, however we do praise ourselves,

Our fancies are more giddy and unfirm,

More longing, wavering, sooner lost and worn,

Than women's are.

Viola. I think it well, my lord. 35

Duke. Then, let thy love be younger than thyself,
Or thy affection cannot hold the bent ;

For women are as roses, whose fair flower

Being once display'd, doth fall that very hour.

Viola. And so they are : alas, that they are so ; 40
To die, even when they to perfection grow !

Re-enter CURIO *with* Clown.

Duke. O, fellow ! come, the song we had last night.
Mark it, Cesario ; it is old and plain ;

The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,

And the free maids that weave their thread with bones, 45

Do use to chant it : it is silly sooth,

And dallies with the innocence of love,

Like the old age.

Clown. Are you ready, sir?

Duke. Ay; prithee, sing. [*Music.* 50]

Clown. Come away, come away, death,
 And in sad cypress let me be laid;
 Fly away, fly away, breath;
 I am slain by a fair cruel maid.
 My shroud of white, stuck all with yew, 55
 O! prepare it.
 My part of death, no one so true
 Did share it.

Not a flower, not a flower sweet,
 On my black coffin let there be strown; 60
 Not a friend, not a friend greet
 My poor corse, where my bones shall be thrown.
 A thousand thousand sighs to save,
 Lay me, O! where
 Sad true lover never find my grave, 65
 To weep there.

Duke. There's for thy pains.

Clown. No pains, sir; I take pleasure in singing, sir.

Duke. I'll pay thy pleasure then. 70

Clown. Truly, sir, and pleasure will be paid, one time or another.

Duke. Give me now leave to leave thee.

Clown. Now, the melancholy god protect thee, and the 75
 tailor make thy doublet of changeable taffeta, for thy
 mind is a very opal! I would have men of such constancy
 put to sea, that their business might be everything and
 their intent everywhere; for that's it that always makes
 a good voyage of nothing. Farewell. [*Exit.* 80]

Duke. Let all the rest give place.

[*Exeunt* CURIO and Attendants.]

Once more, Cesario,

Get thee to yond same sovereign cruelty:
 Tell her, my love, more noble than the world,
 Prizes not quantity of dirty lands;
 The parts that fortune hath bestow'd upon her, 85
 Tell her, I hold as giddily as fortune;
 But 'tis that miracle and queen of gems
 That nature pranks her in attracts my soul.

Viola. But if she cannot love you, sir?

Duke. I cannot be so answer'd.

Viola. Sooth, but you must. 90
 Say that some lady, as perhaps, there is,
 Hath for your love as great a pang of heart

As you have for Olivia : you cannot love her ;
 You tell her so ; must she not then be answer'd ?

Duke. There is no woman's sides 95
 Can bide the beating of so strong a passion
 As love doth give my heart ; no woman's heart
 So big, to hold so much ; they lack retention.
 Alas ! their love may be call'd appetite,
 No motion of the liver, but the palate, 100
 That suffer surfeit, cloyment, and revolt ;
 But mine is all as hungry as the sea,
 And can digest as much. Make no compare
 Between that love a woman can bear me
 And that I owe Olivia.

Viola. Ay, but I know,— 105

Duke. What dost thou know ?

Viola. Too well what love women to men may owe :
 In faith, they are as true of heart as we.
 My father had a daughter lov'd a man,
 As it might be, perhaps, were I a woman, 110
 I should your lordship.

Duke. And what's her history ?

Viola. A blank, my lord. She never told her love,
 But let concealment, like a worm i' the bud,
 Feed on her damask cheek. she pin'd in thought,
 And with a green and yellow melancholy, 115
 She sat like Patience on a monument,
 Smiling at grief. Was not this love indeed ?
 We men may say more, swear more ; but indeed
 Our shows are more than will, for still we prove
 Much in our vows, but little in our love. 120

Duke. But died thy sister of her love, my boy ?

Viola. I am all the daughters of my father's house,
 And all the brothers too ; and yet I know not.
 Sir, shall I to this lady ?

Duke. Ay, that's the theme. 125
 To her in haste ; give her this jewel ; say
 My love can give no place, bide no deny. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V.—OLIVIA'S Garden.

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH, SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK, and FABIAN.

Sir Toby. Come thy ways, Signior Fabian.

Fabian. Nay, I'll come : if I lose a scruple of this sport,
 let me be boiled to death with melancholy.

Sir Toby. Wouldst thou not be glad to have the niggardly rascally sheep-biter come by some notable shame ? 5

Fabian. I would exult, man : you know he brought me out o' favour with my lady about a bear-baiting here. 10

Sir Toby. To anger him we'll have the bear again ; and we will fool him black and blue ; shall we not, Sir Andrew ?

Sir Andrew. An we do not, it is pity of our lives. 15

Sir Toby. Here comes the little villain.

Enter MARIA.

How now, my metal of India !

Maria. Get ye all three into the box-tree. Malvolio's coming down this walk : he has been yonder i' the sun practising behaviour to his own shadow this half-hour. Observe him, for the love of mockery ; for I know this letter will make a contemplative idiot of him. Close, in the name of jesting ! Lie thou there : [*Throws down a letter.*] for here comes the trout that must be caught with tickling. 20
[*Exit.*] 25

Enter MALVOLIO.

Malvolio. 'Tis but fortune ; all is fortune. Maria once told me she did affect me ; and I have heard herself come thus near, that should she fancy, it should be one of my complexion. Besides, she uses me with a more exalted respect than anyone else that follows her. What should I think on 't ? 30

Sir Toby. Here's an over-weening rogue !

Fabian. O, peace ! Contemplation makes a rare turkey-cock of him : how he jets under his advanced plumes ! 35

Sir Andrew. 'Slight, I could so beat the rogue !

Sir Toby. Peace ! I say.

Malvolio. To be Count Malvolio ! 40

Sir Toby. Ah, rogue !

Sir Andrew. Pistol him, pistol him.

Sir Toby. Peace ! peace !

Malvolio. There is example for 't : the lady of the Strachy married the yeoman of the wardrobe. 45

Sir Andrew. Fie on him, Jezebel !

Fabian. O, peace ! now he's deeply in ; look how imagination blows him.

Malvolio. Having been three months married to her, sitting in my state,— 50

Sir Toby. O ! for a stone-bow, to hit him in the eye !

Malvolio. Calling my officers about me, in my branched velvet gown ; having left Olivia sleeping,— 55

Sir Toby. Fire and brimstone !

Fabian. O, peace ! peace !

Malvolio. And then to have the humour of state : and after a demure travel of regard, telling them I know my place, as I would they should do theirs, to ask for my kinsman Toby,— 60

Sir Toby. Bolts and shackles !

Fabian. O, peace, peace, peace ! now, now.

Malvolio. Seven of my people, with an obedient start, make out for him. I frown the while ; and perchance wind up my watch, or play with my—some rich jewel. Toby approaches : curtsies there to me,— 65

Sir Toby. Shall this fellow live ? 70

Fabian. Though our silence be drawn from us with cars, yet peace !

Malvolio. I extend my hand to him thus, quenching my familiar smile with an austere regard of control,— 75

Sir Toby. And does not Toby take you a blow o' the lips then ?

Malvolio. Saying, ' Cousin Toby, my fortunes having cast me on your niece give me this prerogative of speech,'—

Sir Toby. What, what ? 80

Malvolio. ' You must amend your drunkenness.'

Sir Toby. Out, scab !

Fabian. Nay, patience, or we break the sinews of our plot.

Malvolio. ' Besides, you waste the treasure of your time with a foolish knight,'— 85

Sir Andrew. That's me, I warrant you.

Malvolio. ' One Sir Andrew,'—

Sir Andrew. I knew 'twas I ; for many do call me fool. 90

Malvolio. [Seeing the letter.] What employment have we here ?

Fabian. Now is the woodcock near the gin.

Sir Toby. O, peace ! and the spirit of humours intimate reading aloud to him ! 95

Malvolio. [Taking up the letter.] By my life, this is my lady's hand ! these be her very C's, her U's, and her T's ; and thus makes she her great P's. It is, in contempt of question, her hand.

Sir Andrew. Her C's, her U's, and her T's : why that— 100

Malvolio. [*Reads.*] *To the unknown beloved, this and my good wishes :* her very phrases ! By your leave, wax. Soft ! and the impressure her Lucrece, with which she uses to seal : 'tis my lady. To whom should this be ? 105

Fabian. This wins him, liver and all.

Malvolio. Jove knows I love ;
But who ?
Lips, do not move : 110
No man must know.

'No man must know.' What follows ? the numbers altered ! 'No man must know : ' if this should be thee, *Malvolio* !

Sir Toby. Marry, hang thee, brock ! 115

Malvolio. I may command where I adore ;
But silence, like a Lucrece knife,
With bloodless stroke my heart doth gore :
M, O, A, I, doth sway my life.

Fabian. A fustian riddle ! 120

Sir Toby. Excellent wench, say I.

Malvolio. 'M, O, A, I, doth sway my life.' Nay, but first, let me see, let me see, let me see.

Fabian. What dish o' poison has she dressed him ! 125

Sir Toby. And with what wing the staniel checks at it !

Malvolio. 'I may command where I adore.' Why, she may command me : I serve her ; she is my lady. 130
Why, this is evident to any formal capacity ; there is no obstruction in this. And the end, what should that alphabetical position portend ? if I could make that resemble something in me,—Softly !—M, O, A, I,—

Sir Toby. O ! ay, make up that : he is now at a cold scent. 135

Fabian. Sowter will cry upon 't, for all this, though it be as rank as a fox.

Malvolio. M, *Malvolio* ; M, why, that begins my name. 140

Fabian. Did not I say he would work it out ? the cur is excellent at faults.

Malvolio. M,—But then there is no consonancy in the sequel ; that suffers under probation : A should follow, but O does. 145

Fabian. And O shall end, I hope.

Sir Toby. Ay, or I'll cudgel him, and make him cry, O !

Malvolio. And then I comes behind.

Fabian. Ay, an you had any eye behind you, you 150

might see more detraction at your heels than fortunes before you.

Malvolio. M, O, A, I ; this simulation is not as the former ; and yet, to crush this a little, it would bow to me, 155
for every one of these letters are in my name. Soft ! here follows prose

If this fall into thy hand, revolve. In my stars I am above thee ; but be not afraid of greatness : some are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. Thy Fates 160
open their hands : let thy blood and spirit embrace them ; and to inure thyself to what thou art like to be, cast thy humble slough, and appear fresh. Be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants ; let thy tongue tang arguments of state ; put thyself into the trick of singularity. She thus advises thee that sighs for thee. Remember 165
who commended thy yellow stockings, and wished to see thee ever cross-gartered : I say, remember. Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so ; if not, let me see thee a steward still, the fellow of servants, and not worthy to touch Fortune's fingers. Farewell. She 170
that would alter services with thee.

THE FORTUNATE-UNHAPPY.

Daylight and champion discovers not more : this is open. 175
I will be proud, I will read politic authors, I will baffle Sir Toby, I will wash off gross acquaintance, I will be point-devise the very man. I do not now fool myself, to let imagination jade me, for every reason excites to this, 180
that my lady loves me. She did commend my yellow stockings of late, she did praise my leg being cross-gartered ; and in this she manifests herself to my love, and, with a kind of injunction drives me to these habits of her liking. I thank my stars I am happy. I will be strange, 185
stout, in yellow stockings, and cross-gartered, even with the swiftness of putting on. Jove and my stars be praised ! Here is yet a postscript. 190

Thou canst not choose but know who I am. If thou entertainest my love, let it appear in thy smiling ; thy smiles become thee well ; therefore in my presence still smile, dear my sweet, I prithee.

Jove, I thank thee. I will smile : I will do everything 195
that thou wilt have me. [*Exit.*]

Fabian. I will not give my part of this sport for a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy.

Sir Toby. I could marry this wench for this device. 200

Sir Andrew. So could I too.

Sir Toby. And ask no other dowry with her but such another jest.

Sir Andrew. Nor I neither.

205

Fabian. Here comes my noble gull-catcher.

Re-enter MARIA.

Sir Toby. Wilt thou set thy foot o' my neck ?

Sir Andrew. Or o' mine either ?

Sir Toby. Shall I play my freedom at tray-trip, and
become thy bond-slave ? 210

Sir Andrew. I' faith, or I either ?

Sir Toby. Why, thou hast put him in such a dream,
that when the image of it leaves him he must run mad.

Maria. Nay, but say true ; does it work upon him ? 215

Sir Toby. Like aqua-vitæ with a midwife.

Maria. If you will, then see the fruits of the sport,
mark his first approach before my lady ; he will come to 220
her in yellow stockings, and 'tis a colour she abhors ; and
cross-gartered, a fashion she detests ; and he will smile
upon her, which will now be so unsuitable to her disposi-
tion, being addicted to a melancholy as she is, that it
cannot but turn him into a notable contempt. If you will 225
see it, follow me.

Sir Toby. To the gates of Tartar, thou most excellent
devil of wit !

Sir Andrew. I'll make one too.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT III.

SCENE I.—OLIVIA'S Garden.

Enter VIOLA, and Clown with a tabor.

Viola. Save thee, friend, and thy music. Dost thou
live by thy tabor ?

Clown. No, sir, I live by the church.

Viola. Art thou a churchman ?

Clown. No such matter, sir : I do live by the church ; 5
for I do live at my house, and my house doth stand by
the church.

Viola. So thou mayst say, the king lies by a beggar,
if a beggar dwell near him ; or, the church stands by thy 10
tabor, if thy tabor stand by the church.

Clown. You have said, sir. To see this age ! A sen-
tence is but a cheveril glove to a good wit : how quickly 15
the wrong side may be turned outward !

Viola. Nay, that's certain : they that dally nicely with
words may quickly make them wanton.

Clown. I would therefore my sister had had no name, sir. 20

Viola. Why, man ?

Clown. Why, sir, her name's a word ; and to dally with that word might make my sister wanton. But indeed, words are very rascals since bonds disgraced them 25

Viola. Thy reason, man ?

Clown. Troth, sir, I can yield you none without words ; and words are grown so false, I am loath to prove reason with them.

Viola. I warrant thou art a merry fellow, and carest for nothing. 30

Clown. Not so, sir, I do care for something ; but in my conscience, sir, I do not care for you : if that be to care for nothing, sir, I would it would make you invisible. 35

Viola. Art not thou the Lady Olivia's fool ?

Clown. No, indeed, sir ; the Lady Olivia has no folly : she will keep no fool, sir, till she be married ; and fools are as like husbands as pilchards are to herrings,—the husband's the bigger. I am indeed not her fool, but her corrupter of words. 40

Viola. I saw thee late at the Count Orsino's.

Clown. Foolery, sir, does walk about the orb like the sun ; it shines every where. I would be sorry, sir, but the fool should be as oft with your master as with my mistress. I think I saw your wisdom there. 45

Viola. Nay, an thou pass upon me, I'll no more with thee. Hold, there's expenses for thee. 50

[*Gives a piece of money.*]

Clown. Now Jove, in his next commodity of hair, send thee a beard !

Viola. By my troth, I'll tell thee, I am almost sick for one, though I would not have it grow on my chin. Is thy lady within ? 55

Clown. [*Pointing to the coin.*] Would not a pair of these have bred, sir ?

Viola. Yes, being kept together and put to use.

Clown. I would play Lord Pandarus of Phrygia, sir, to bring a Cressida to this Troilus. 60

Viola. I understand you, sir ; 'tis well begg'd.

Clown. The matter, I hope, is not great, sir, begging but a beggar : Cressida was a beggar. My lady is within, sir. I will conster to them whence you come ; who you are and what you would are out of my welkin ; I might say 'element,' but the word is overworn. 65

[*Exit.*]

Viola. This fellow's wise enough to play the fool,
 And to do that well craves a kind of wit :
 He must observe their mood on whom he jests, 70
 The quality of persons, and the time,
 And, like the haggard, check at every feather
 That comes before his eye. This is a practice
 As full of labour as a wise man's art ;
 For folly that he wisely shows is fit ; 75
 But wise men folly-fall'n, quite taint their wit.

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK.

Sir Toby. Save you, gentleman.

Viola. And you, sir.

Sir Andrew. *Dieu vous garde, monsieur.*

Viola. *Et vous aussi ; votre serviteur.* 80

Sir Andrew. I hope, sir, you are ; and I am yours.

Sir Toby. Will you encounter the house ? my niece is
 desirous you should enter, if your trade be to her. 85

Viola. I am bound to your niece, sir : I mean, she is
 the list of my voyage.

Sir Toby. Taste your legs, sir : put them to motion.

Viola. My legs do better understand me, sir, than I 90
 understand what you mean by bidding me taste my legs.

Sir Toby. I mean, to go, sir, to enter.

Viola. I will answer you with gait and entrance. But 95
 we are prevented.

Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.

Most excellent accomplished lady, the heavens rain odours
 on you !

Sir Andrew. That youth's a rare courtier. 'Rain
 odours !' well.

Viola. My matter hath no voice, lady, but to your 100
 own most pregnant and vouchsafed ear.

Sir Andrew. 'Odours,' 'pregnant,' and 'vouchsafed.'
 I'll get 'em all three all ready.

Olivia. Let the garden door be shut, and leave me to 105
 my hearing.

[*Exeunt SIR TOBY, SIR ANDREW, and MARIA.*

Give me your hand, sir.

Viola. My duty, madam, and most humble service.

Olivia. What is your name ?

Viola. Cesario is your servant's name, fair princess.

Olivia. My servant, sir ! 'Twas never merry world 110

Since lowly feigning was call'd compliment.

You're servant to the Count Orsino, youth.

Viola. And he is yours, and his must needs be yours :
Your servant's servant is your servant, madam.

Olivia. For him, I think not on him : for his thoughts, 115
Would they were blanks rather than fill'd with me !

Viola. Madam, I come to whet your gentle thoughts
On his behalf.

Olivia. O ! by your leave, I pray you,
I bade you never speak again of him :
But, would you undertake another suit, 120
I had rather hear you to solicit that
Than music from the spheres.

Viola. Dear lady,—

Olivia. Give me leave, beseech you. I did send,
After the last enchantment you did here, 125
A ring in chase of you : so did I abuse
Myself, my servant, and, I fear me, you :
Under your hard construction must I sit,
To force that on you, in a shameful cunning,
Which you knew none of yours : what might you think ?
Have you not set mine honour at the stake, 131
And baited it with all th' unmuzzled thoughts
That tyrannous heart can think ? To one of your receiving
Enough is shown ; a cypress, not a bosom,
Hideth my heart. So, let me hear you speak. 135

Viola. I pity you.

Olivia. That's a degree to love.

Viola. No, not a grize ; for 'tis a vulgar proof
That very oft we pity enemies.

Olivia. Why, then methinks 'tis time to smile again. 140
O world ! how apt the poor are to be proud.
If one should be a prey, how much the better
To fall before the lion than the wolf ! [Clock strikes.

The clock upbraids me with the waste of time.
Be not afraid, good youth, I will not have you : 145
And yet, when wit and youth is come to harvest,
Your wife is like to reap a proper man :
There lies your way, due west.

Viola. Then westward-ho !
Grace and good disposition attend your ladyship !
You'll nothing, madam, to my lord by me ? 150

Olivia. Stay :
I prithee, tell me what thou think'st of me.

Viola. That you do think you are not what you are.

Olivia. If I think so, I think the same of you.

Viola. Then think you right : I am not what I am. 155

Olivia. I would you were as I would have you be !

Viola. Would it be better, madam, than I am ?

I wish it might, for now I am your fool.

Olivia. O ! what a deal of scorn looks beautiful

In the contempt and anger of his lip. 160

A murderous guilt shows not itself more soon

Than love that would seem hid ; love's night is noon.

Cesario, by the roses of the spring,

By maidhood, honour, truth, and every thing,

I love thee so, that, maugre all thy pride, 165

Nor wit nor reason can my passion hide.

Do not extort thy reasons from this clause,

For that I woo, thou therefore hast no cause ;

But rather reason thus with reason fetter,

Love sought is good, but giv'n unsought is better. 170

Viola. By innocence I swear, and by my youth,

I have one heart, one bosom, and one truth,

And that no woman has ; nor never none

Shall mistress be of it, save I alone.

And so adieu, good madam : never more 175

Will I my master's tears to you deplore.

Olivia. Yet come again, for thou perhaps mayst move
That heart, which now abhors, to like his love. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in OLIVIA'S House.*

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH, SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK, *and* FABIAN.

Sir Andrew. No, faith, I'll not stay a jot longer.

Sir Toby. Thy reason, dear venom ; give thy reason.

Fabian. You must needs yield your reason, Sir Andrew. 5

Sir Andrew. Marry, I saw your niece do more favours
to the count's serving-man than ever she bestowed upon
me ; I saw 't i' the orchard:

Sir Toby. Did she see thee the while, old boy ? tell 10
me that.

Sir Andrew. As plain as I see you now.

Fabian. This was a great argument of love in her
toward you.

Sir Andrew. 'Slight ! will you make an ass o' me ? 15

Fabian. I will prove it legitimate, sir, upon the oaths
of judgment and reason.

Sir Toby. And they have been grand-jurymen since before Noah was a sailor.

Fabian. She did show favour to the youth in your sight only to exasperate you, to awake your dormouse valour, to put fire in your heart, and brimstone in your liver. You should then have accosted her, and with some excellent jests, fire-new from the mint, you should have banged the youth into dumbness. This was looked for at your hand, and this was balked : the double guilt of this opportunity you let time wash off, and you are now sailed into the north of my lady's opinion ; where you will hang like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard, unless you do redeem it by some laudable attempt, either of valour or policy. 20 25 30

Sir Andrew. An't be any way, it must be with valour, for policy I hate : I had as lief be a Brownist as a politician. 35

Sir Toby. Why, then, build me thy fortunes upon the basis of valour : challenge me the count's youth to fight with him ; hurt him in eleven places : my niece shall take note of it ; and assure thyself, there is no love-broker in the world can more prevail in man's commendation with woman than report of valour. 40

Fabian. There is no way but this, Sir Andrew.

Sir Andrew. Will either of you bear me a challenge to him ? 45

Sir Toby. Go, write it in a martial hand ; be curst and brief ; it is no matter how witty, so it be eloquent, and full of invention : taunt him with the licence of ink : if thou thou'st him some thrice, it shall not be amiss ; and as many lies as will lie in thy sheet of paper, although the sheet were big enough for the bed of Ware in England, set 'em down : go, about it. Let there be gall enough in thy ink, though thou write with a goose-pen, no matter : about it. 50 55

Sir Andrew. Where shall I find you ?

Sir Toby. We'll call thee at the *cubiculo* : go.

[Exit SIR ANDREW.]

Fabian. This is a dear manakin to you, Sir Toby. 60

Sir Toby. I have been dear to him, lad, some two thousand strong, or so.

Fabian. We shall have a rare letter from him ; but you'll not deliver it.

Sir Toby. Never trust me, then : and by all means stir on the youth to an answer. I think oxen and wain-ropes cannot hale them together. For Andrew, if he were 65

opened, and you find so much blood in his liver as will clog
the foot of a flea, I'll eat the rest of the anatomy. 70

Fabian. And his opposite, the youth, bears in his visage
no great presage of cruelty.

Sir Toby. Look, where the youngest wren of nine comes.

Enter MARIA.

Maria. If you desire the spleen, and will laugh your- 75
selves into stitches, follow me. Yond gull Malvolio is
turned heathen, a very renegado ; for there is no Chris-
tian, that means to be saved by believing rightly, can
ever believe such impossible passages of grossness. He's 80
in yellow stockings.

Sir Toby. And cross-gartered ?

Maria. Most villainously ; like a pedant that keeps 85
a school i' the church. I have dogged him like his mur-
derer. He does obey every point of the letter that I
dropped to betray him : he does smile his face into more
lines than are in the new map with the augmentation of
the Indies. You have not seen such a thing as 'tis ; I can
hardly forbear hurling things at him. I know my lady 90
will strike him : if she do, he'll smile and take 't for a great
favour.

Sir Toby. Come, bring us, bring us where he is. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A Street.*

Enter SEBASTIAN and ANTONIO.

Sebastian. I would not by my will have troubled you ;
But since you make your pleasure of your pains,
I will no further chide you.

Antonio. I could not stay behind you : my desire, 5
More sharp than filed steel, did spur me forth ;
And not all love to see you,—though so much
As might have drawn one to a longer voyage,—
But jealousy what might befall your travel,
Being skillless in these parts ; which to a stranger, 10
Unguided and unfriended, often prove
Rough and unhospitable ; my willing love,
The rather by these arguments of fear,
Set forth in your pursuit.

Sebastian. My kind Antonio,
I can no other answer make but thanks,
And thanks, and ever thanks ; for oft good turns 15
Are shuffled off with such uncurrent pay :

But, were my worth, as is my conscience, firm,
You should find better dealing. What's to do ?
Shall we go see the reliques of this town ?

Antonio. To-morrow, sir : best first go see your lodging. 20

Sebastian. I am not weary, and 'tis long to night :

I pray you, let us satisfy our eyes
With the memorials and the things of fame
That do renown this city.

Antonio. Would you'd pardon me ;

I do not without danger walk these streets : 25

Once, in a sea-fight 'gainst the Count his galleys,

I did some service ; of such note indeed,

That were I ta'en here it would scarce be answer'd.

Sebastian. Belike you slew great number of his people ?

Antonio. The offence is not of such a bloody nature, 30
Albeit the quality of the time and quarrel

Might well have given us bloody argument.

It might have since been answer'd in repaying

What we took from them ; which, for traffic's sake,

Most of our city did : only myself stood out ; 35

For which, if I be lapsed in this place,

I shall pay dear.

Sebastian. Do not then walk too open.

Antonio. It doth not fit me. Hold, sir ; here's my purse.

In the south suburbs, at the Elephant,

Is best to lodge : I will bespeak our diet, 40

Whiles you beguile the time and feed your knowledge

With viewing of the town : there shall you have me.

Sebastian. Why I your purse ?

Antonio. Haply your eye shall light upon some toy

You have desire to purchase ; and your store, 45

I think, is not for idle markets, sir.

Sebastian. I'll be your purse-bearer and leave you for
an hour.

Antonio. To the Elephant.

Sebastian. I do remember.

[*Exeunt.* 50

SCENE IV.—OLIVIA'S Garden.

Enter OLIVIA and MARIA.

Olivia. I have sent after him : he says he'll come :
How shall I feast him ? what bestow of him ?

For youth is bought more oft than begg'd or borrow'd.

I speak too loud.

Where is Malvolio ? he is sad, and civil, 5
 And suits well for a servant with my fortunes :
 Where is Malvolio ?

Maria. He's coming, madam ; but in very strange manner. He is, sure, possess'd, madam.

Olivia. Why, what's the matter ? does he rave ? 10

Maria. No, madam ; he does nothing but smile : your ladyship were best to have some guard about you if he come, for sure the man is tainted in's wits.

Olivia. Go call him hither. [*Exit MARIA.*] 15

I am as mad as he,
 If sad and merry madness equal be.

Re-enter MARIA, with MALVOLIO.

How now, Malvolio !

Malvolio. Sweet lady, ho, ho.

Olivia. Smil'st thou ? 20

I sent for thee upon a sad occasion.

Malvolio. Sad, lady ! I could be sad : this does make some obstruction in the blood, this cross-gartering ; but what of that ? if it please the eye of one, it is with me as 25
 the very true sonnet is, ' Please one and please all.'

Olivia. Why, how dost thou, man ? what is the matter with thee ?

Malvolio. Not black in my mind, though yellow in my legs. It did come to his hands, and commands shall be 30
 executed : I think we do know the sweet Roman hand. 32

Olivia. God comfort thee ! Why dost thou smile so 36
 and kiss thy hand so oft ?

Maria. How do you, Malvolio ?

Malvolio. At your request. Yes ; nightingales answer 40
 daws.

Maria. Why appear you with this ridiculous boldness before my lady ?

Malvolio. ' Be not afraid of greatness : ' 'Twas well writ.

Olivia. What meanest thou by that, Malvolio ? 45

Malvolio. ' Some are born great,'—

Olivia. Ha !

Malvolio. ' Some achieve greatness,'—

Olivia. What sayst thou ?

Malvolio. ' And some have greatness thrust upon them.' 50

Olivia. Heaven restore thee !

Malvolio. ' Remember who commended thy yellow stockings,'—

Olivia. Thy yellow stockings ! 55

Malvolio. And wished to see thee cross-gartered.'

Olivia. Cross-gartered !

Malvolio. Go to, thou art made, if thou desirest to be so, —

Olivia. Am I made ? 60

Malvolio. If not, let me see thee a servant still.'

Olivia. Why, this is very midsummer madness.

Enter Servant.

Servant. Madam, the young gentleman of the Count Orsino's is returned. I could hardly entreat him back : he attends your ladyship's pleasure. 65

Olivia. I'll come to him. [*Exit Servant.*] Good Maria, let this fellow be looked to. Where's my cousin Toby ? Let some of my people have a special care of him : I would not have him miscarry for the half of my dowry. 70

[*Exeunt OLIVIA and MARIA.*]

Malvolio. Oh, ho ! do you come near me now ? no worse man than Sir Toby to look to me ! This concurs directly with the letter : she sends him on purpose, that I may appear stubborn to him ; for she incites me to that in the letter. 'Cast thy humble slough,' says she ; 'be opposite with a kinsman, surly with servants ; let thy tongue tang with arguments of state ; put thyself into the trick of singularity ;' and consequently sets down the manner how ; as, a sad face, a reverend carriage, a slow tongue, in the habit of some sir of note, and so forth. I have limed her ; but it is Jove's doing, and Jove make me thankful ! And when she went away now, 'Let this fellow be looked to ;' fellow ! not Malvolio, nor after my degree, but fellow. Why, everything adheres together, that no dram of a scruple, no scruple of a scruple, no obstacle, no incredulous or unsafe circumstance—What can be said ? Nothing that can be can come between me and the full prospect of my hopes. Well, Jove, not I, is the doer of this, and he is to be thanked. 75 80 85 90

Re-enter MARIA, with SIR TOBY BELCH and FABIAN.

Sir Toby. Which way is he, in the name of sanctity ? If all the devils in hell be drawn in little, and Legion himself possess'd him, yet I'll speak to him. 95

Fabian. Here he is, here he is. How is't with you, sir ? how is't with you, man ? 100

Malvolio. Go off ; I discard you : let me enjoy my private ; go off.

Maria. Lo, how hollow the fiend speaks within him ! did not I tell you ? Sir Toby, my lady prays you to have a care of him. 105

Malvolio. Ah, ha : does she so ?

Sir Toby. Go to, go to : peace ! peace ! we must deal gently with him ; let me alone. How do you, Malvolio ? how is't with you ? What, man ! defy the devil : consider, he's an enemy to mankind. 110

Malvolio. Do you know what you say ?

Maria. La you ! an you speak ill of the devil, how he takes it at heart. Pray God, he be not bewitched ! My lady would not lose him for more than I'll say. 115

Malvolio. How now, mistress ! 120

Maria. O Lord !

Sir Toby. Prithee, hold thy peace ; this is not the way : do you not see you move him ? let me alone with him.

Fabian. No way but gentleness ; gently, gently : the fiend is rough, and will not be roughly used. 125

Sir Toby. Why, how now, my bawcock ! how dost thou, chuck ?

Malvolio. Sir !

Sir Toby. Ay, Biddy, come with me. What, man ! 'tis not for gravity to play at cherry-pit with Satan : hang him, foul collier ! 130

Maria. Get him to say his prayers, good Sir Toby, get him to pray.

Malvolio. My prayers, minx ! 135

Maria. No, I warrant you, he will not hear of godliness.

Malvolio. Go, hang yourselves all ! you are idle shallow things : I am not of your element. You shall know more hereafter. [Exit. 140

Sir Toby. Is't possible ?

Fabian. If this were played upon a stage now, I could condemn it as an improbable fiction.

Sir Toby. His very genius hath taken the infection of the device, man. 145

Maria. Nay, pursue him now, lest the device take air, and taint.

Fabian. Why, we shall make him mad indeed.

Maria. The house will be the quieter.

Sir Toby. Come, we'll have him in a dark room, and 150

bound. My niece is already in the belief that he's mad : we may carry it thus, for our pleasure and his penance, till our very pastime, tired out of breath, prompt us to have mercy on him ; at which time we will bring the device to the bar, and crown thee for a finder of madmen. But see, but see.

Enter SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK.

Fabian. More matter for a May morning.

Sir Andrew. Here's the challenge ; read it : I warrant there's vinegar and pepper in 't. 160

Fabian. Is't so saucy ?

Sir Andrew. Ay, is't, I warrant him : do but read.

Sir Toby. Give me. *Youth, whatsoever thou art, thou art but a scurvy fellow.* 165

Fabian. Good, and valiant.

Sir Toby. Wonder not, nor admire not in thy mind, why I do call thee so, for I will show thee no reason for't.

Fabian. A good note, that keeps you from the blow of the law. 170

Sir Toby. Thou comest to the Lady Olivia, and in my sight she uses thee kindly : but thou liest in thy throat ; that is not the matter I challenge thee for. 175

Fabian. Very brief, and to exceeding good sense—less.

Sir Toby. I will waylay thee going home ; where, if it be thy chance to kill me,—

Fabian. Good. 180

Sir Toby. Thou killest me like a rogue and a villain.

Fabian. Still you keep o' the windy side of the law : good.

Sir Toby. Fare thee well ; and God have mercy upon one of our souls ! He may have mercy upon mine, but my hope is better ; and so look to thyself. Thy friend, as thou usest him, and thy sworn enemy, 185

ANDREW AGUECHEEK. 190

If this letter move him not, his legs cannot. I'll give't him.

Maria. You may have very fit occasion for't : he is now in some commerce with my lady, and will by and by depart. 195

Sir Toby. Go, Sir Andrew : scout me for him at the corner of the orchard like a bum-bailly : so soon as ever thou seest him, draw ; and, as thou drawest, swear horrible ; for it comes to pass oft that a terrible oath, with a swaggering accent sharply twanged off, gives manhood 200

more approbation than ever proof itself would have earned him. Away !

Sir Andrew. Nay, let me alone for swearing. [*Exit.*

Sir Toby. Now will not I deliver his letter : for the 205
behaviour of the young gentleman gives him out to be of
good capacity and breeding ; his employment between
his lord and my niece confirms no less : therefore this
letter, being so excellently ignorant, will breed no terror in 210
the youth : he will find it comes from a clodpole. But,
sir, I will deliver his challenge by word of mouth ; set upon
Aguecheek a notable report of valour ; and drive the
gentleman,—as I know his youth will aptly receive it,— 215
into a most hideous opinion of his rage, skill, fury, and
impetuosity. This will so fright them both that they
will kill one another by the look, like cockatrices.

Fabian. Here he comes with your niece : give them 220
way till he take leave, and presently after him.

Sir Toby. I will meditate the while upon some horrid
message for a challenge.

[*Exeunt* SIR TOBY, FABIAN, and MARIA.

Re-enter OLIVIA, with VIOLA.

Olivia. I have said too much unto a heart of stone.
And laid mine honour too unchary out : 225
There's something in me that reproves my fault,
But such a headstrong potent fault it is
That it but mocks reproof.

Viola. With the same haviour that your passion bears
Goes on my master's griefs. 230

Olivia. Here ; wear this jewel for me, 'tis my picture ;
Refuse it not ; it hath no tongue to vex you ;
And I beseech you come again to-morrow.
What shall you ask of me that I'll deny,
That honour sav'd may upon asking give ? 235

Viola. Nothing but this : your true love for my master.

Olivia. How with mine honour may I give him that
Which I have given to you ?

Viola. I will acquit you.

Olivia. Well, come again to-morrow ; fare thee well :
A fiend like thee might bear my soul to hell. [*Exit.* 240

Re-enter SIR TOBY BELCH and FABIAN.

Sir Toby. Gentleman, God save thee.

Viola. And you, sir.

Sir Toby. That defence thou hast, betake thee to 't : of what nature the wrongs are thou hast done him, I know not ; but thy interceptor, full of despite, bloody as the hunter, attends thee at the orchard-end. Dismount thy tuck, be yare in thy preparation, for thy assailant is quick, skilful, and deadly. 245

Viola. You mistake, sir : I am sure no man hath any quarrel to me : my remembrance is very free and clear from any image of offence done to any man. 250

Sir Toby. You'll find it otherwise, I assure you : therefore, if you hold your life at any price, betake you to your guard ; for your opposite hath in him what youth, strength, skill, and wrath, can furnish man withal. 255

Viola. I pray you, sir, what is he ?

Sir Toby. He is knight dubbed with unhatched rapier, and on carpet consideration ; but he is a devil in private brawl : souls and bodies hath he divorced three, and his incensement at this moment is so implacable that satisfaction can be none but by pangs of death and sepulchre. Hob, nob, is his word : give't or take't. 260 265

Viola. I will return again into the house and desire some conduct of the lady : I am no fighter. I have heard of some kind of men that put quarrels purposely on others to taste their valour ; belike this is a man of that quirk. 270

Sir Toby. Sir, no ; his indignation derives itself out of a very competent injury : therefore get you on and give him his desire. Back you shall not to the house, unless you undertake that with me which with as much safety you might answer him : therefore, on, or strip your sword stark naked ; for meddle you must, that's certain, or forswear to wear iron about you. 275

Viola. This is as uncivil as strange. I beseech you, do me this courteous office, as to know of the knight what my offence to him is : it is something of my negligence, nothing of my purpose. 280

Sir Toby. I will do so. Signior Fabian, stay you by this gentleman till my return. *[Exit.* 285

Viola. Pray you, sir, do you know of this matter ?

Fabian. I know the knight is incensed against you, even to a mortal arbitrement, but nothing of the circumstance more. 290

Viola. I beseech you, what manner of man is he ?

Fabian. Nothing of that wonderful promise, to read him by his form, as you are like to find him in the proof of 295

his valour. He is, indeed, sir, the most skilful, bloody, and fatal opposite that you could possibly have found in any part of Illyria. Will you walk towards him ? I will make your peace with him if I can.

Viola. I shall be much bound to you for't : I am one 300
that had rather go with sir priest than sir knight : I care
not who knows so much of my mettle. [*Exeunt.*]

Re-enter SIR TOBY, with SIR ANDREW.

Sir Toby. Why, man, he's a very devil ; I have not
seen such a firago. I had a pass with him, rapier, scab- 305
bard and all, and he gives me the stuck in with such a
mortal motion that it is inevitable ; and on the answer,
he pays you as surely as your feet hit the ground they step
on. They say he has been fencer to the Sophy. 310

Sir Andrew. Pox on't, I'll not meddle with him.

Sir Toby. Ay, but he will not now be pacified : Fabian
can scarce hold him yonder.

Sir Andrew. Plague on't ; an I thought he had been so 315
valiant and cunning in fence I'd have seen him damned
ere I'd have challenged him. Let him let the matter slip,
and I'll give him my horse, grey Capilet.

Sir Toby. I'll make the motion. Stand here ; make 320
a good show on't : this shall end without the perdition of
souls.—[*Aside.*] Marry, I'll ride your horse as well as I ride
you.

Re-enter FABIAN and VIOLA.

[*To FABIAN.*] I have his horse to take up the quarrel. I 325
have persuaded him the youth's a devil.

Fabian. He is as horribly conceited of him ; and pants
and looks pale, as if a bear were at his heels.

Sir Toby. There's no remedy, sir ; he will fight with 330
you for his oath's sake. Marry, he hath better bethought
him of his quarrel, and he finds that now scarce to be worth
talking of : therefore draw for the supportance of his vow :
he protests he will not hurt you.

Viola. [*Aside.*] Pray God defend me ! A little thing 335
would make me tell them how much I lack of a man.

Fabian. Give ground, if you see him furious.

Sir Toby. Come, Sir Andrew, there's no remedy : the
gentleman will, for his honour's sake, have one bout with 340
you ; he cannot by the duello avoid it : but he has promised
me, as he is a gentleman and a soldier, he will not hurt you.
Come on ; to't.

Sir Andrew. Pray God, he keep his oath ! [Draws. 345

Viola. I do assure you, 'tis against my will. [Draws.

Enter ANTONIO.

Antonio. Put up your sword. If this young gentleman
Have done offence, I take the fault on me :

If you offend him, I for him defy you. [Drawing.

Sir Toby. You, sir ! why, what are you ? 350

Antonio. One, sir, that for his love dares yet do more
Than you have heard him brag to you he will.

Sir Toby. Nay, if you be an undertaker, I am for you.
[Draws.

Fabian. O, good sir Toby, hold ! here come the officers. 355

Sir Toby. I'll be with you anon.

Viola. [To SIR ANDREW.] Pray, sir, put your sword up,
if you please.

Sir Andrew. Marry, will I, sir; and, for that I promised 360
you, I'll be as good as my word. He will bear you easily
and reins well.

Enter two Officers.

First Officer. This is the man ; do thy office.

Second Officer. Antonio, I arrest thee at the suit
Of Count Orsino.

Antonio. You do mistake me, sir. 365

First Officer. No, sir, no jot : I know your favour well,
Though now you have no sea-cap on your head.
Take him away : he knows I know him well.

Antonio. I must obey.—[To VIOLA.] This comes with
seeking you :

But there's no remedy : I shall answer it. 370

What will you do, now my necessity
Makes me to ask you for my purse ? It grieves me
Much more for what I cannot do for you
Than what befalls myself. You stand amaz'd :

But be of comfort.

Second Officer. Come, sir, away. 375

Antonio. I must entreat of you some of that money.

Viola. What money, sir ?

For the fair kindness you have show'd me here,
And part, being prompted by your present trouble,
Out of my lean and low ability 380
I'll lend you something : my having is not much :
I'll make division of my present with you.

Hold, there is half my coffer.

Antonio.

Will you deny me now ?

Is't possible that my deserts to you
Can lack persuasion ? Do not tempt my misery, 385
Lest that it make me so unsound a man
As to upbraid you with those kindnesses
That I have done for you.

Viola.

I know of none ;

Nor know I you by voice or any feature.
I hate ingratitude more in a man 390
Than lying, vainness, babbling drunkenness,
Or any taint of vice whose strong corruption
Inhabits our frail blood.

Antonio.

O heavens themselves !

Second Officer. Come, sir : I pray you, go.

Antonio. Let me speak a little. This youth that you see
here 395

I snatch'd one-half out of the jaws of death,
Reliev'd him with such sanctity of love,
And to his image, which methought did promise
Most venerable worth, did I devotion.

First Officer. What's that to us ? The time goes by : away !

Antonio. But O ! how vile an idol proves this god. 401
Thou hast, Sebastian, done good feature shame.
In nature there's no blemish but the mind ;
None can be call'd deform'd but the unkind :
Virtue is beauty, but the beauteous evil 405
Are empty trunks o'erflourish'd by the devil.

First Officer. The man grows mad : away with him !
Come, come, come, sir.

Antonio. Lead me on. [*Exeunt Officers with ANTONIO.*]

Viola. Methinks his words do from such passion fly,
That he believes himself ; so do not I. 410
Prove true, imagination, O, prove true,
That I, dear brother, be now ta'en for you !

Sir Toby. Come hither, knight ; come hither, Fabian :
we'll whisper o'er a couplet or two of most sage saws. 415

Viola. He nam'd Sebastian : I my brother know
Yet living in my glass ; even such and so
In favour was my brother ; and he went
Still in this fashion, colour, ornament,
For him I imitate. O ! if it prove, 420
Tempests are kind, and salt waves fresh in love ! [*Exit.*]

Sir Toby. A very dishonest paltry boy, and more a

coward than a hare. His dishonesty appears in leaving his friend here in necessity, and denying him ; and for his cowardship, ask Fabian. 425

Fabian. A coward, a most devout coward, religious in it.

Sir Andrew. 'Slid, I'll after him again and beat him.

Sir Toby. Do ; cuff him soundly, but never draw thy sword. 430

Sir Andrew. An I do not,— [Exit.

Fabian. Come, let's see the event.

Sir Toby. I dare lay any money 'twill be nothing yet. [Exeunt.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The Street adjoining OLIVIA'S House.*

Enter SEBASTIAN and Clown.

Clown. Will you make me believe that I am not sent for you ?

Sebastian. Go to, go to ; thou art a foolish fellow : Let me be clear of thee.

Clown. Well held out, i' faith ! No, I do not know you ; nor I am not sent to you by my lady to bid you come speak with her ; nor your name is not Master Cesario ; nor this is not my nose neither. Nothing that is so is so. 5

Sebastian. I prithee, vent thy folly somewhere else : Thou know'st not me. 10

Clown. Vent my folly ! He has heard that word of some great man, and now applies it to a fool. Vent my folly ! I am afraid this great lubber, the world, will prove a cockney. I prithee now, ungird thy strangeness and tell me what I shall vent to my lady. Shall I vent to her that thou art coming ? 15

Sebastian. I prithee, foolish Greek, depart from me : There's money for thee : if you tarry longer I shall give worse payment. 20

Clown. By my troth, thou hast an open hand. These wise men that give fools money get themselves a good report after fourteen years' purchase. 25

Enter SIR ANDREW.

Sir Andrew. Now, sir, have I met you again ? there's for you. [Striking SEBASTIAN.

Sebastian. Why, there's for thee, and there, and there, and there ! [Beating SIR ANDREW.

Are all the people mad ?

Enter SIR TOBY and FABIAN.

Sir Toby. Hold, sir, or I'll throw your dagger o'er the house. 30

Clown. This will I tell my lady straight. I would not be in some of your coats for twopence. [*Exit.*

Sir Toby. [*Holding SEBASTIAN.*] Come on, sir : hold. 35

Sir Andrew. Nay, let him alone ; I'll go another way to work with him : I'll have an action of battery against him if there be any law in Illyria. Though I struck him first, yet it's no matter for that. 40

Sebastian. Let go thy hand.

Sir Toby. Come, sir, I will not let you go. Come, my young soldier, put up your iron : you are well fleshed ; come on.

Sebastian. I will be free from thee. [*Disengaging himself.*] What wouldst thou now ? 45

If thou dar'st tempt me further, draw thy sword.

Sir Toby. What, what ! Nay then, I must have an ounce or two of this malapert blood from you. [*Draws.*

Enter OLIVIA.

Olivia. Hold, Toby ! on thy life I charge thee, hold !

Sir Toby. Madam ! 50

Olivia. Will it be ever thus ? Ungracious wretch ! Fit for the mountains and the barbarous caves, Where manners ne'er were preach'd. Out of my sight ! Be not offended, dear Cesario. Rudesby, be gone !

[*Exeunt SIR TOBY, SIR ANDREW, and FABIAN.*

I prithee, gentle friend, 55

Let thy fair wisdom, not thy passion, sway

In this uncivil and unjust extent

Against thy peace. Go with me to my house,

And hear thou there how many fruitless pranks

This ruffian hath botch'd up, that thou thereby 60

Mayst smile at this. Thou shalt not choose but go :

Do not deny. Beshrew his soul for me,

He started one poor heart of mine in thee.

Sebastian. What relish is in this ? how runs the stream ?

Or I am mad, or else this is a dream : 65

Let fancy still my sense in Lethe steep ;

If it be thus to dream, still let me sleep !

Olivia. Nay ; come, I prithee. Would thou'dst be rul'd by me !

Sebastian. Madam, I will.

Olivia.

O ! say so, and so be !

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in OLIVIA'S House.*

Enter MARIA and Clown ; MALVOLIO in a dark chamber adjoining.

Maria. Nay, I prithee, put on this gown and this beard ; make him believe thou art Sir Topas the curate : do it quickly ; I'll call Sir Toby the whilst. [*Exit.*]

Clown. Well, I'll put it on and I will dissemble myself in't : and I would I were the first that ever dissembled in such a gown. I am not tall enough to become the function well, nor lean enough to be thought a good student ; but to be said an honest man and a good housekeeper goes as fairly as to say a careful man and a great scholar. The competitors enter. 5 10

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH and MARIA.

Sir Toby. Jove bless thee, Master parson.

Clown. *Bonos dies*, Sir Toby : for, as the old hermit of Prague, that never saw pen and ink, very wittily said to a niece of King Gorboduc, ' That, that is, is ; ' so I, being Master parson, am Master parson ; for, what is ' that,' but ' that,' and ' is,' but ' is ? ' 15

Sir Toby. To him, Sir Topas. 20

Clown. What ho ! I say. Peace in this prison !

Sir Toby. The knave counterfeits well ; a good knave.

Malvolio. [*Within.*] Who calls there ?

Clown. Sir Topas, the curate, who comes to visit Malvolio the lunatic. 25

Malvolio. Sir Topas, Sir Topas, good Sir Topas, go to my lady.

Clown. Out, hyperbolical fiend ! how vexest thou this man ! Talkest thou nothing but of ladies ? 30

Sir Toby. Well said, Master Parson.

Malvolio. [*Within.*] Sir Topas, never was man thus wronged. Good Sir Topas, do not think I am mad : they have laid me here in hideous darkness. 35

Clown. Fie, thou dishonest Satan ! I call thee by the most modest terms ; for I am one of those gentle ones that will use the devil himself with courtesy. Sayst thou that house is dark ?

Malvolio. As hell, Sir Topas. 40

Clown. Why, it hath bay-windows transparent as

barricadoes, and the clerestories toward the south-north are as lustrous as ebony ; and yet complainest thou of obstruction ?

Malvolio. I am not mad, Sir Topas. I say to you, 45
this house is dark.

Clown. Madman, thou errest : I say, there is no darkness but ignorance, in which thou art more puzzled than the Egyptians in their fog.

Malvolio. I say this house is as dark as ignorance, 50
though ignorance were as dark as hell ; and I say, there was never man thus abused. I am no more mad than you are : make the trial of it in any constant question.

Clown. What is the opinion of Pythagoras concerning 55
wild fowl ?

Malvolio. That the soul of our grandam might haply inhabit a bird.

Clown. What thinkest thou of his opinion ?

Malvolio. I think nobly of the soul, and no way ap- 60
prove his opinion.

Clown. Fare thee well : remain thou still in darkness : thou shalt hold the opinion of Pythagoras ere I will allow of thy wits, and fear to kill a woodcock, lest thou dispossess 65
the soul of thy grandam. Fare thee well.

Malvolio. Sir Topas ! Sir Topas !

Sir Toby. My most exquisite Sir Topas !

Clown. Nay, I am for all waters.

Maria. Thou mightst have done this without thy beard 70
and gown : he sees thee not.

Sir Toby. To him in thine own voice, and bring me word how thou findest him : I would we were well rid of this knavery. If he may be conveniently delivered, 75
I would he were ; for I am now so far in offence with my niece that I cannot pursue with any safety this sport to the upshot. Come by and by to my chamber.

[*Exeunt SIR TOBY and MARIA.*]

Clown. Hey Robin, jolly Robin,
Tell me how thy lady does. 80

Malvolio. Fool !

Clown. My lady is unkind, perdy !

Malvolio. Fool !

Clown. Alas, why is she so ?

Malvolio. Fool, I say ! 85

Clown. She loves another.
Who calls, ha ?

Malvolio. Good fool, as ever thou wilt deserve well at my hand, help me to a candle, and pen, ink, and paper. 90
As I am a gentleman, I will live to be thankful to thee for't.

Clown. Master Malvolio !

Malvolio. Ay, good fool.

Clown. Alas, sir, how fell you beside your five wits ? 95

Malvolio. Fool, there was never man so notoriously abused : I am as well in my wits, fool, as thou art.

Clown. But as well ? then you are mad indeed, if you be no better in your wits than a fool. 100

Malvolio. They have here propertyed me ; keep me in darkness, send ministers to me, asses ! and do all they can to face me out of my wits.

Clown. Advise you what you say : the minister is here. Malvolio, Malvolio, thy wits the heavens restore ! endeavour thyself to sleep, and leave thy vain bibble-babble. 105

Malvolio. Sir Topas !

Clown. Maintain no words with him, good fellow.—Who, I, sir ? not I, sir. God be wi' you, good Sir Topas. 110
Marry, amen. I will, sir, I will.

Malvolio. Fool, fool, fool, I say !

Clown. Alas, sir, be patient. What say you, sir ? I am shent for speaking to you. 115

Malvolio. Good fool, help me to some light and some paper : I tell thee I am as well in my wits as any man in Illyria.

Clown. Well-a-day, that you were, sir !

Malvolio. By this hand, I am. Good fool, some ink, 120
paper, and light ; and convey what I will set down to my lady : it shall advantage thee more than ever the bearing of letter did.

Clown. I will help you to't. But tell me true, are you 125
not mad indeed ? or do you but counterfeit ?

Malvolio. Believe me, I am not : I tell thee true.

Clown. Nay, I'll ne'er believe a madman till I see his brains. I will fetch you light and paper and ink. 130

Malvolio. Fool, I'll requite it in the highest degree : I prithee, be gone.

Clown. I am gone, sir,

And anon, sir,

I'll be with you again

In a trice,

Like to the old Vice,

Your need to sustain ;

Who with dagger of lath, 140
 In his rage and his wrath,
 Cries, Ah, ah ! to the devil :
 Like a mad lad,
 Pare thy nails, dad ;
 Adieu, goodman drivell. [Exit. 145

SCENE III.—*Olivia's Garden.**Enter* SEBASTIAN.

Sebastian. This is the air ; that is the glorious sun ;
 This pearl she gave me, I do feel't and see't ;
 And though 'tis wonder that enwraps me thus,
 Yet 'tis not madness. Where's Antonio then ?
 I could not find him at the Elephant ; 5
 Yet there he was, and there I found this credit,
 That he did range the town to seek me out.
 His counsel now might do me golden service ;
 For though my soul disputes well with my sense
 That this may be some error, but no madness, 10
 Yet doth this accident and flood of fortune
 So far exceed all instance, all discourse,
 That I am ready to distrust mine eyes,
 And wrangle with my reason that persuades me
 To any other trust but that I am mad 15
 Or else the lady's mad : yet, if 'twere so,
 She could not sway her house, command her followers,
 Take and give back affairs and their dispatch
 With such a smooth, discreet, and stable bearing
 As I perceive she does. There's something in't 20
 That is deceivable. But here the lady comes.

Enter OLIVIA and a Priest.

Olivia. Blame not this haste of mine. If you mean well,
 Now go with me and with this holy man
 Into the chantry by ; there, before him,
 And underneath that consecrated roof, 25
 Plight me the full assurance of your faith ;
 That my most jealous and too doubtful soul
 May live at peace. He shall conceal it
 Whiles you are willing it shall come to note,
 What time we will our celebration keep 30
 According to my birth. What do you say ?

Sebastian. I'll follow this good man, and go with you ;
 And, having sworn truth, ever will be true.

Olivia. Then lead the way, good father ; and heavens so
shine
That they may fairly note this act of mine ! 35

[*Exeunt.*

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Street before OLIVIA'S House.*

Enter Clown and FABIAN.

Fabian. Now, as thou lovest me, let me see his letter.

Clown. Good Master Fabian, grant me another request.

Fabian. Anything. 5

Clown. Do not desire to see this letter.

Fabian. This is, to give a dog, and, in recompense
desire my dog again.

Enter DUKE, VIOLA, CURIO, and Attendants.

Duke. Belong you to the Lady Olivia, friends ?

Clown. Ay, sir ; we are some of her trappings. 10

Duke. I know thee well : how dost thou, my good
fellow ?

Clown. Truly, sir, the better for my foes and the worse
for my friends.

Duke. Just the contrary ; the better for thy friends. 15

Clown. No, sir, the worse.

Duke. How can that be ?

Clown. Marry, sir, they praise me and make an ass of
me ; now my foes tell me plainly I am an ass : so that by 20
my foes, sir, I profit in the knowledge of myself, and by my
friends I am abused : so that, conclusions to be as kisses,
if your four negatives make your two affirmatives, why
then, the worse for my friends and the better for my foes. 25

Duke. Why, this is excellent.

Clown. By my troth, sir, no ; though it please you to
be one of my friends.

Duke. Thou shalt not be the worse for me : there's 30
gold.

Clown. But that it would be double-dealing, sir, I would
you could make it another.

Duke. O, you give me ill counsel.

Clown. Put your grace in your pocket, sir, for this once, 35
and let your flesh and blood obey it.

Duke. Well, I will be so much a sinner to be a double-
dealer : there's another.

Clown. *Primo, secundo, tertio*, is a good play ; and the old saying is, ‘ the third pays for all : ’ the *triplex*, sir, is a good tripping measure ; or the bells of Saint Bennet, sir, may put you in mind ; one, two, three. 40

Duke. You can fool no more money out of me at this throw : if you will let your lady know I am here to speak with her, and bring her along with you, it may awake my bounty further. 45

Clown. Marry, sir, lullaby to your bounty till I come again. I go, sir ; but I would not have you to think that my desire of having is the sin of covetousness ; but as you say, sir, let your bounty take a nap, I will awake it anon. 50
[*Exit.*]

Viola. Here comes the man, sir, that did rescue me.

Enter ANTONIO and Officers.

Duke. That face of his I do remember well ; 55
Yet when I saw it last, it was besmear’d
As black as Vulcan in the smoke of war.
A bawbling vessel was he captain of,
For shallow draught and hulk unprizable ;
With which such scathful grapple did he make 60
With the most noble bottom of our fleet,
That very envy and the tongue of loss
Cried fame and honour on him. What’s the matter ?

First Officer. Orsino, this is that Antonio
That took the Phoenix and her fraught from Candy ; 65
And this is he that did the Tiger board,
When your young nephew Titus lost his leg.
Here in the streets, desperate of shame and state,
In private brabble did we apprehend him.

Viola. He did me kindness, sir, drew on my side ; 70
But in conclusion put strange speech upon me :
I know not what ’twas but distraction.

Duke. Notable pirate ! thou salt-water thief !
What foolish boldness brought thee to their mercies
Whom thou, in terms so bloody and so dear, 75
Hast made thine enemies ?

Antonio. Orsino, noble sir,
Be pleas’d that I shake off these names you give me :
Antonio never yet was thief or pirate,
Though I confess, on base and ground enough,
Orsino’s enemy. A witchcraft drew me hither : 80
That most ingrateful boy there by your side,

From the rude sea's enrag'd and foamy mouth
 Did I redeem ; a wrack past hope he was :
 His life I gave him, and did thereto add
 My love, without retention or restraint, 85
 All his in dedication ; for his sake
 Did I expose myself, pure for his love,
 Into the danger of this adverse town ;
 Drew to defend him when he was beset :
 Where being apprehended, his false cunning, 90
 Not meaning to partake with me in danger,
 Taught him to face me out of his acquaintance,
 And grew a twenty years removed thing
 While one would wink, denied me mine own purse,
 Which I had recommended to his use 95
 Not half an hour before.

Viola. How can this be ?

Duke. When came he to this town ?

Antonio. To-day, my lord ; and for three months before,—
 No interim, not a minute's vacancy,—
 Both day and night did we keep company. 100

Enter OLIVIA and Attendants.

Duke. Here comes the countess : now heaven walks on earth !

But for thee, fellow ; fellow, thy words are madness :
 Three months this youth hath tended upon me ;
 But more of that anon. Take him aside.

Olivia. What would my lord, but that he may not have,
 Wherein Olivia may seem serviceable ? 106
Cesario, you do not keep promise with me.

Viola. Madam !

Duke. Gracious Olivia.—

Olivia. What do you say, *Cesario* ? Good my lord,— 110

Viola. My lord would speak ; my duty hushes me.

Olivia. If it be aught to the old tune, my lord,
 It is as fat and fulsome to mine ear
 As howling after music.

Duke. Still so cruel ?

Olivia. Still so constant, lord. 115

Duke. What, to perverseness ? you uncivil lady,
 To whose ingrate and unauspicious altars
 My soul the faithfull'st offerings hath breath'd out
 That e'er devotion tender'd ! What shall I do ?

Olivia. Even what it please my lord, that shall become him.

Duke. Why should I not, had I the heart to do it, 121
 Like to the Egyptian thief at point of death,
 Kill what I love ? a savage jealousy
 That sometimes savours nobly. But hear me this :
 Since you to non-regardance cast my faith, 125
 And that I partly know the instrument
 That screws me from my true place in your favour,
 Live you, the marble-breasted tyrant still ;
 But this your minion, whom I know you love,
 And whom, by heaven I swear, I tender dearly, 130
 Him will I tear out of that cruel eye,
 Where he sits crowned in his master's spite.
 Come, boy, with me ; my thoughts are ripe in mischief ;
 I'll sacrifice the lamb that I do love,
 To spite a raven's heart within a dove. [Going. 135

Viola. And I, most jocund, apt, and willingly,
 To do you rest, a thousand deaths would die.
 [Following.]

Olivia. Where goes Cesario ?

Viola. After him I love
 More than I love these eyes, more than my life,
 More, by all mores, than e'er I shall love wife. 140
 If I do feign, you witnesses above
 Punish my life for tainting of my love !

Olivia. Ah me, detested ! how am I beguil'd !

Viola. Who does beguile you ? who does do you wrong ?

Olivia. Hast thou forgot thyself ? Is it so long ? 145
 Call forth the holy father. [Exit an Attendant.]

Duke. [To VIOLA.] Come away

Olivia. Whither, my lord ? Cesario, husband, stay.

Duke. Husband ?

Olivia. Ay, husband . can he that deny ?

Duke. Her husband, sirrah ?

Viola. No, my lord, not I.

Olivia. Alas ! it is the baseness of thy fear 150
 That makes thee strangle thy propriety.
 Fear not, Cesario ; take thy fortunes up ;
 Be that thou know'st thou art, and then thou art
 As great as that thou fear'st.

Enter Priest.

O, welcome, father !

Father, I charge thee, by thy reverence, 155
 Here to unfold,—though lately we intended

To keep in darkness what occasion now
Reveals before 'tis ripe,—what thou dost know
Hath newly pass'd between this youth and me.

Priest. A contract of eternal bond of love, 160
Confirm'd by mutual joinder of your hands,
Attested by the holy close of lips,
Strengthen'd by interchangement of your rings ;
And all the ceremony of this compact
Seal'd in my function, by my testimony : 165
Since when, my watch hath told me, toward my grave
I have travell'd but two hours.

Duke. O, thou dissembling cub ! what wilt thou be
When time hath sow'd a grizzle on thy case ?
Or will not else thy craft so quickly grow 170
That thine own trip shall be thine overthrow ?
Farewell, and take her ; but direct thy feet
Where thou and I henceforth may never meet.

Viola. My lord, I do protest,—

Olivia. O ! do not swear :
Hold little faith, though thou hast too much fear. 175

Enter SIR ANDREW AGUECHEEK, with his head broken.

Sir Andrew. For the love of God, a surgeon ! send one
presently to Sir Toby.

Olivia. What's the matter ?

Sir Andrew. He has broke my head across, and has
given Sir Toby a bloody coxcomb too. For the love of 180
God, your help ! I had rather than forty pound I were at
home.

Olivia. Who has done this, Sir Andrew ?

Sir Andrew. The count's gentleman, one Cesario : we
took him for a coward, but he's the very devil incardinate. 185

Duke. My gentleman, Cesario ?

Sir Andrew. Od's lifelings ! here he is. You broke my
head for nothing ! and that that I did, I was set on to do't
by Sir Toby.

Viola. Why do you speak to me ? I never hurt you : 190
You drew your sword upon me without cause ;
But I bespake you fair, and hurt you not.

Sir Andrew. If a bloody coxcomb be a hurt, you have
hurt me : I think you set nothing by a bloody coxcomb. 195

Enter SIR TOBY BELCH, drunk, led by the Clown.

Here comes Sir Toby halting ; you shall hear more : but if

he had not been in drink he would have tickled you other-gates than he did.

200

Duke. How now, gentleman ! how is't with you ?

Sir Toby. That's all one : he has hurt me, and there's the end on't. Sot, didst see Dick surgeon, sot ?

205

Clown. O ! he's drunk, Sir Toby, an hour ago : his eyes were set at eight i' the morning.

Sir Toby. Then he's a rogue, and a passy-measures pavin. I hate a drunken rogue.

Olivia. Away with him ! Who hath made this havoc with them ?

210

Sir Andrew. I'll help you, Sir Toby, because we'll be dressed together.

Sir Toby. Will you help ? an ass-head and a coxcomb and a knave, a thin-faced knave, a gull !

215

Olivia. Get him to bed, and let his hurt be look'd to.

[*Exeunt Clown, FABIAN, SIR TOBY, and SIR ANDREW.*]

Enter SEBASTIAN.

Sebastian. I am sorry, madam, I have hurt your kinsman ;

But, had it been the brother of my blood,
I must have done no less with wit and safety.

220

You throw a strange regard upon me, and by that I do perceive it hath offended you :

Pardon me, sweet one, even for the vows

We made each other but so late ago.

225

Duke. One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons ;
A natural perspective, that is, and is not !

Sebastian. Antonio ! O my dear Antonio !

How have the hours rack'd and tortur'd me

Since I have lost thee !

230

Antonio. Sebastian are you ?

Sebastian. Fear'st thou that, Antonio ?

Antonio. How have you made division of yourself ?
An apple cleft in two is not more twin

Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian ?

Olivia. Most wonderful !

235

Sebastian. Do I stand there ? I never had a brother ;

Nor can there be that deity in my nature,

Of here and every where. I had a sister,

Whom the blind waves and surges have devour'd.

Of charity, what kin are you to me ?

240

What countryman ? what name ? what parentage ?

Viola. Of Messaline : Sebastian was my father ;
Such a Sebastian was my brother too,
So went he suited to his watery tomb.
If spirits can assume both form and suit 245
You come to fright us.

Sebastian. A spirit I am indeed ;
But am in that dimension grossly clad
Which from the womb I did participate.
Were you a woman, as the rest goes even,
I should my tears let fall upon your cheek, 250
And say, 'Thrice welcome, drowned Viola !'

Viola. My father had a mole upon his brow.

Sebastian. And so had mine.

Viola. And died that day when Viola from her birth
Had number'd thirteen years. 255

Sebastian. O ! that record is lively in my soul.
He finished indeed his mortal act
That day that made my sister thirteen years.

Viola. If nothing lets to make us happy both
But this my masculine usurp'd attire, 260
Do not embrace me till each circumstance
Of place, time, fortune, do cohere and jump
That I am Viola : which to confirm,
I'll bring you to a captain in this town,
Where lie my maiden weeds : by whose gentle help 265
I was preserv'd to serve this noble count.
All the occurrence of my fortune since
Hath been between this lady and this lord.

Sebastian. [To OLIVIA.] So comes it, lady, you have been
mistook :

But nature to her bias drew in that. 270
You would have been contracted to a maid ;
Nor are you therein, by my life, deceiv'd,
You are betroth'd both to a maid and man.

Duke. Be not amaz'd ; right noble is his blood.
If this be so, as yet the glass seems true, 275
I shall have share in this most happy wrack.
[To VIOLA.] Boy, thou hast said to me a thousand times
Thou never shouldst love woman like to me.

Viola. And all those sayings will I over-swear,
And all those swearings keep as true in soul 280
As doth that orb'd continent the fire
That severs day from night.

Duke. Give me thy hand :

And let me see thee in thy woman's weeds.

Viola. The captain that did bring me first on shore
Hath my maid's garments : he upon some action 285
Is now in durance at Malvolio's suit,
A gentleman and follower of my lady's.

Olivia. He shall enlarge him. Fetch Malvolio hither.
And yet, alas, now I remember me,
They say, poor gentleman, he's much distract. 290
A most extracting frenzy of mine own
From my remembrance clearly banish'd his.

Re-enter Clown with a letter, and FABIAN.

How does he, sirrah ?

Clown. Truly, madam, he holds Belzebub at the stave's
end as well as a man in his case may do. He has here writ 295
a letter to you : I should have given it to you to-day morn-
ing ; but as a madman's epistles are no gospels, so it skills
not much when they are delivered.

Olivia. Open it, and read it. 300

Clown. Look then to be well edified, when the fool
delivers the madman.

By the Lord, madam,—

Olivia. How now ! art thou mad ?

Clown. No, madam, I do but read madness : an your 305
ladyship will have it as it ought to be, you must
allow *vox*.

Olivia. Prithee, read i' thy right wits.

Clown. So I do, madonna ; but to read his right wits is
to read thus : therefore perpend, my princess, and give ear. 310

Olivia. [To FABIAN.] Read it you, sirrah.

Fabian. *By the Lord, madam, you wrong me, and the
world shall know it : though you have put me into darkness, 315
and given your drunken cousin rule over me, yet have I the
benefit of my senses as well as your ladyship. I have your
own letter that induced me to the semblance I put on ; with the
which I doubt not but to do myself much right, or you much 320
shame. Think of me as you please. I leave my duty a little
unthought of, and speak out of my injury.*

THE MADLY-USED MALVOLIO.

Olivia. Did he write this ?

Clown. Ay, madam. 325

Duke. This savours not much of distraction.

Olivia. See him deliver'd, Fabian ; bring him hither.

[Exit FABIAN.]

My lord, so please you, these things further thought on,
To think me as well a sister as a wife,
One day shall crown the alliance on't, so please you, 330
Here at my house and at my proper cost.

Duke. Madam, I am most apt to embrace your offer.
[*To VIOLA.*] Your master quits you ; and, for your service
done him,

So much against the mettle of your sex,
So far beneath your soft and tender breeding ; 335
And since you call'd me master for so long,
Here is my hand : you shall from this time be
Your master's mistress.

Olivia. A sister ! you are she.

Re-enter FABIAN, with MALVOLIO.

Duke. Is this the madman ?

Olivia. Ay, my lord, this same.

How now, Malvolio !

Malvolio. Madam, you have done me wrong, 340
Notorious wrong.

Olivia. Have I, Malvolio ? no.

Malvolio. Lady, you have. Pray you peruse that letter
You must not now deny it is your hand :
Write from it, if you can, in hand or phrase,
Or say 'tis not your seal nor your invention : 345
You can say none of this. Well, grant it then,
And tell me, in the modesty of honour,
Why you have given me such clear lights of favour,
Bade me come smiling and cross-garter'd to you,
To put on yellow stockings, and to frown 350
Upon Sir Toby and the lighter people ;
And, acting this in an obedient hope,
Why have you suffer'd me to be imprison'd,
Kept in a dark house, visited by the priest,
And made the most notorious geck and gull 355
That e'er invention play'd on ? tell me why.

Olivia. Alas ! Malvolio, this is not my writing,
Though, I confess, much like the character ;
But, out of question, 'tis Maria's hand :
And now I do bethink me, it was she 360
First told me thou wast mad ; then cam'st in smiling,
And in such forms which here were presuppos'd
Upon thee in the letter. Prithee, be content :
This practice hath most shrewdly pass'd upon thee ;

But when we know the grounds and authors of it, 365
 Thou shalt be both the plaintiff and the judge
 Of thine own cause.

Fabian. Good madam, hear me speak,
 And let no quarrel nor no brawl to come
 Taint the condition of this present hour,
 Which I have wonder'd at. In hope it shall not, 370
 Most freely I confess, myself and Toby
 Set this device against Malvolio here,
 Upon some stubborn and uncourteous parts
 We had conceiv'd against him. Maria writ
 The letter at Sir Toby's great importance ; 375
 In recompense whereof he hath married her.
 How with a sportful malice it was follow'd,
 May rather pluck on laughter than revenge,
 If that the injuries be justly weigh'd
 That have on both sides past. 380

Olivia. Alas, poor fool, how have they baffled thee !

Clown. Why, 'some are born great, some achieve
 greatness, and some have greatness thrown upon them.'
 I was one, sir, in this interlude ; one Sir Topas, sir ; but
 that's all one. 'By the Lord, fool, I am not mad : ' 385
 But do you remember ? 'Madam, why laugh you at such
 a barren rascal ? an you smile not, he's gagged : ' and
 thus the whirligig of time brings in his revenges.

Malvolio. I'll be reveng'd on the whole pack of you. 390
 [Exit.

Olivia. He hath been most notoriously abus'd.

Duke. Pursue him, and entreat him to a peace ;—
 He hath not told us of the captain yet :
 When that is known and golden time convents,
 A solemn combination shall be made 395
 Of our dear souls. Meantime, sweet sister,
 We will not part from hence. Cesario, come ;
 For so you shall be, while you are a man ;
 But when in other habits you are seen,
 Orsino's mistress, and his fancy's queen. 400

[Exeunt all except Clown.

SONG.

Clown. When that I was and a little tiny boy,
 With hey, ho, the wind and the rain ;
 A foolish thing was but a toy,
 For the rain it raineth every day.

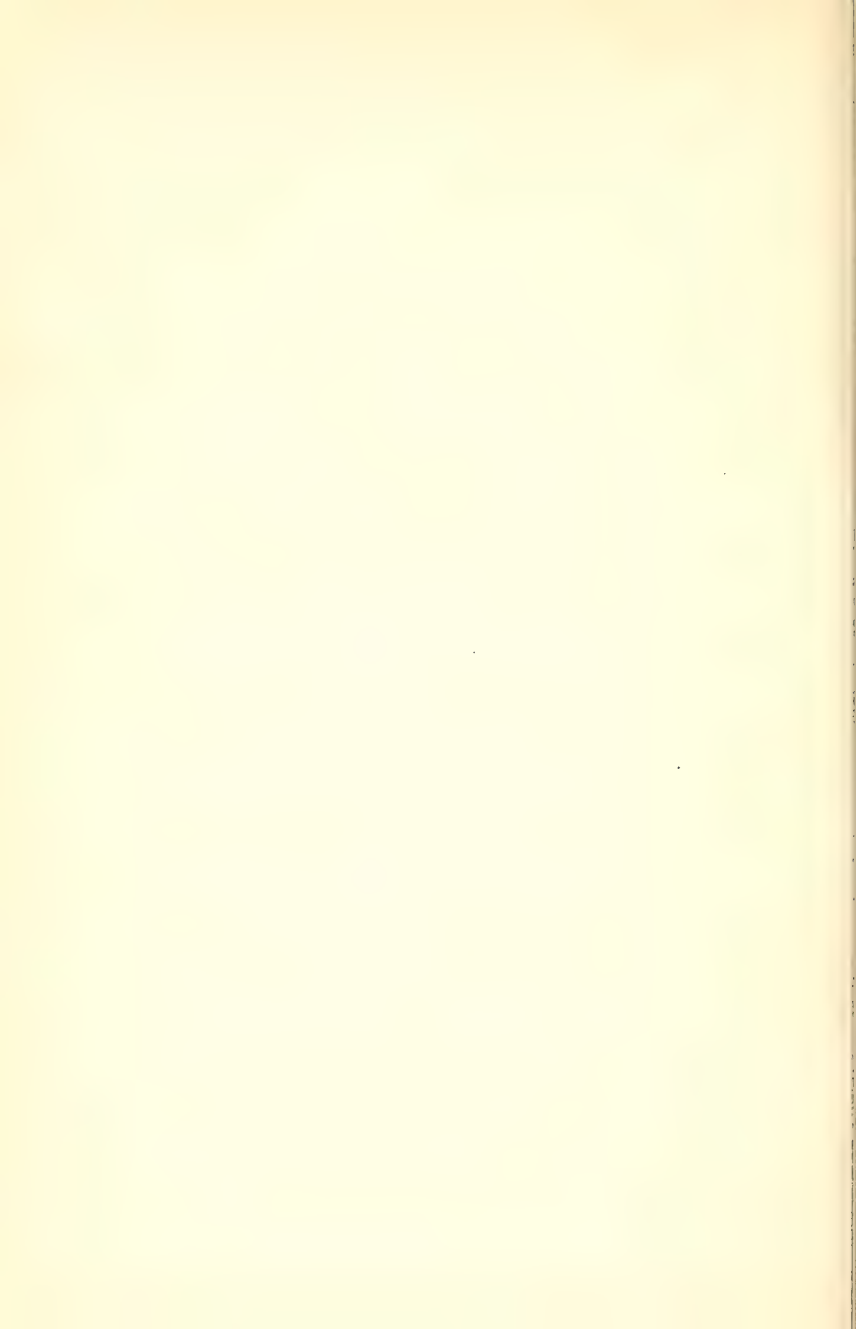
But when I came to man's estate, 405
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain ;
'Gainst knaves and thieves men shut their gates,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came, alas ! to wive,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain ; 410
By swaggering could I never thrive,
For the rain it raineth every day.

But when I came unto my beds,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain ;
With toss-pots still had drunken heads, 415
For the rain it raineth every day.

A great while ago the world begun,
With hey, ho, the wind and the rain ;
But that's all one, our play is done,
And we'll strive to please you every day. 420

[*Exit.*



NOTES

N.E.D. = *New English Dictionary.*

ACT I, SCENE I. 5. *sound*, whisper of the wind. Many change 'sound' to 'south', but this is impossible. Shakespeare never mentions the south wind except to curse it or to curse with it, as the mother of fogs, rottenness, and disease. There is a proverb about it: 'When the wind 's in the south, it 's in the rain's mouth.'

9. *quick*, alive. This is the original meaning, preserved in a phrase of the Apostles' Creed, 'the quick and the dead.'

12. *validity and pitch*, value and eminence.

13. Sinks or 'abates' from its eminence, and loses its value.

14-15. *so full of shapes*, &c. So full is love of the shapes and figures of fancy that there is nothing comes near it for high fantasy.—This 'fantasy' is the 'shaping fantasy' or creative imagination of *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, v. i. 5, the peculiar property of lovers, madmen, and poets. 'Fancy' means love, here and in a hundred other places in Shakespeare.

18-23. *Why so I do . . . e'er since pursue me*. Since he first saw Olivia his fierce desires give him no rest. He is himself a hart ('the noblest that I have'), and they hunt him remorselessly. So the hunter Actaeon (for this was in the Duke's mind) was turned into a stag and hunted down by his own dogs for having dared to look at Diana while she bathed.

26. *The element*, the sky. The word is remarked on in III. i. 67.

till seven years' heat, till seven years' heat is past, till seven summers are gone.

27. *at ample view*, at full view.

28. *cloistress*, nun.

30. *eye-offending brine*, i. e. salt tears.

30-1. *to season a brother's dead love*, &c., to season and preserve it with the salt of her tears; to pickle it, in fact. 'A brother's dead love,' instead of 'a dead brother's love', suits the metaphor. If 'love' is to be pickled it is more realistic to have it 'dead'. Altogether, a fine example of false wit.

32. *remembrance*. Sound as four syllables, trilling the 'r'.

35. *the rich golden shaft*. This is Cupid's 'best arrow with the golden head' (*Midsummer-Night's Dream*, I. i. 170). His arrows, the poets said, were of two sorts: golden arrows, to incite love, and arrows of lead to repel it.

37-9. When liver, brain, and heart, these seats of the sovereign powers in man, are all supplied, and all her sweet perfections filled, with one and the same king.—The liver was thought to be the seat of passion, the brain of judgement, and the heart of sentiment or affection.

39. *perfections*. Sound as four syllables.

self, selfsame. Cp. *King Lear*, i. i. 71: 'I am made of that self metal that my sister is.'

ACT I, SCENE II. 3. *Elysium*, the Paradise of the ancients.

9. *those poor number*. 'Number' is plural in meaning, and Shakespeare took it so.

10. *driving*, drifting.

13. *lived*, kept afloat.

14. *Arion* (Αρίων) was a Greek musician who lived more than 600 years before our era. The story is that, being threatened with death by a thievish crew of Corinthian sailors, he begged as a last favour to be allowed to play his harp once more, and then throw himself into the sea. The favour was granted; he played and sang, and springing overboard was miraculously received by a herd of dolphins which had gathered to listen to his charming music. To put him on the back of one of them and carry him to land was, as our story-tellers say, 'the work of a moment.'

28. *late*, lately.

40. *deliver'd*, discovered, shown. Cp. *Coriolanus*, v. v. 141: 'I'll deliver Myself your loyal servant, or endure Your heaviest censure.'

40-2. I wish I might not be discovered to the world till I have prepared the ripe and proper moment for the disclosure—I mean, of what my estate in life is.

51. *Conceal me what I am*: a more concrete expression of 'conceal what I am'. Cp. i. v. 271. Shakespeare is fond of this idiom.

57. *allow me*, approve me, make me to be acknowledged.

59. *shape thou thy silence to my wit*, be guided by my wit and say nothing.

ACT I, SCENE III. 5. *cousin* here means 'niece'. In i. v. 125, 130 it means 'uncle'. It was used loosely for all those relationships which involve cousinship in the strict sense, i.e. uncle, aunt, nephew, niece, &c.

7. *let her except before excepted*. 'Except before excepted' was a law-phrase, common in leases, meaning 'those things excepted which have before been excepted'. Sir Toby uses it with no particular meaning, content that it jingles with Maria's 'exceptions'.

21. *tall*. A 'tall' man was a cant term for a man of mettle, a fine lusty fellow. It is one of the affected phrases ridiculed by Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet*, II. iv. 30 f.: 'A very good blade! A very tall man!'

25. *but a year in all these ducats*, i.e. he'll have run through his whole fortune in a year.

29. *viol-de-gamboys*, a base-viol (Ital. *viola di gamba*, or 'leg-viol', because it was held between the legs).

37. *By this hand*: a common oath of the time, correct enough to be used by Malvolio (II. iii. 134; IV. ii. 120).

38. *substractors*. 'Detractors' is the word he would be at.

44. *coystril*, knave, varlet (originally, a groom).

45-6. *turn o' the toe like a parish-top*, spin like a parish-top. 'A large top was formerly kept in every village, to be whipped in frosty weather,

that the peasants might be kept warm by exercise, and out of mischief, while they could not work' (Steevens).

46. *Castiliano vulgo!* Sir Toby's version of *Castiliano rolto!* Pull on a 'Castilian face', he says; look as grave as a Spaniard; for here comes Ague-face.

53. *Accost*, draw alongside, make up to. So 'board' (l. 61)=make up to, make advances to: more emphatic than 'accost'.

75. '*thought is free*.' She refers to Sir Andrew's question: 'do you think you have fools in hand?' (ll. 70-1). '*Thought is free*,' she says, according to the proverb. That is, 'I may think what I like so long as I say nothing.'

76. *the buttery-bar*, the store-room bar. The 'buttery' was originally the store-room for liquor, the place where the 'butts' of ale were kept; then, the store-room for provisions generally.

79. *It's dry*. She insinuates, as Dr. Johnson remarked, 'that it is not a lover's hand, a moist hand being vulgarly accounted a sign of an amorous constitution.'

86. *I am barren*, i.e. my wit is barren. I can jest no more. Cp. i. v. 90.

104. *Then hadst thou had an excellent head of hair*. 'Tongues' (l. 100) and 'tongs' were pronounced alike. Sir Toby, spying a joke, takes him to have meant curling-tongs.

116. *she'll none of me*, she'll have none of me, she'll have nothing to do with me.

125. *kickshaws*, toys, trifles. It is the plural of 'kickshaws', formed from Fr. *quelque chose*, 'something', to express the idea of a 'something' French, an elegant 'something'.

128-9. and yet *I will not compare with an old man*. If this has any meaning Shakespeare's editors are much to blame, for not one of them has discovered it. But perhaps no meaning was to be expected. When Sir Andrew talks, reason takes a holiday.

130. *galliard*, a quick lively dance in triple time (Fr. *gaillard*).

132. *the mutton*: as if Sir Andrew had meant the 'caper' for capersauce.

133. *the back-trick*, some sort of caper backwards in dancing.

137. *Mistress Mall's picture*. The allusion is uncertain. There was a notorious person called Mary Frith, or Mall Cutpurse, who has almost every qualification to be Mistress Mall. She was a thief, a bully, and a dozen other things. She went about in man's clothes, drinking, smoking, and fighting freely. There was a book published about her in 1610, and a play, *The Roaring Girl, or Moll Cutpurse*, in 1611, with her portrait in frontispiece.

The trouble is that *Twelfth Night* was written ten years or so before this stir. At that time Mall Cutpurse, aged about sixteen, was too young to have acquired such fame. Who, then, is Mistress Mall? If she is not Mall Cutpurse, we do not know who she is. If, as seems probable, she is Mall Cutpurse, then the passage in which she is mentioned must have been inserted at some later time, probably in 1610 or 1611, when she was in the public eye.

139. *coranto*, another lively dance in triple time (Fr. *courante*, lit. 'running dance').

142. *under the star of a galliard.* A plain man would have said, 'under the influence of a planet favourable to dancing.' The old belief in the influence of the planets and constellations upon the destinies of men, and upon their bodily and mental constitutions, was still active in Shakespeare's time. Cp. I. iv. 35; II. i. 4-6, &c.

145. *indifferent well*, fairly well.

146. *stock*, stocking.

150. *Taurus! that's sides and heart.* Taurus, or the Bull, is one of the twelve signs of the Zodiac. Each sign, according to the old astrological belief referred to on l. 142, had a certain part or parts of the body in its particular control. Taurus governed the neck and throat, Aries or the Ram governed the head, and so on. Sir Andrew and Sir Toby are both wrong, which was Shakespeare's design.

ACT I, SCENE IV. 11. *on your attendance*, in attendance on you.

20. *spoke*, said.

27. *in thy youth*, in a youth like thee.

28. *nuncio*, messenger (Lat. *nuntius*).

aspect: to be sounded 'aspect' everywhere in Shakespeare.

31. *Diana's lip.* Diana, in the classical mythology, was the virgin goddess.

32. *rubious*, ruby-red: a word coined for the occasion.

33. *sound*, unbroken, not yet 'cracked'.

34. *all is semblative a woman's part*, all resembles a woman's part, altogether you look just like some one playing a woman's part. Women's parts were at this time always acted by boys.

35. *thy constellation*, the constellation under which you were born. Cp. I. iii. 142 n.

41. *barful*, full of bars or obstacles.

ACT I, SCENE V. 6. *to fear no colours*, to fear nothing and nobody. The phrase was born in the wars, as Maria says, and meant 'to fear no foe'. It is used for the sake of the pun ('colours', 'collars').

10. *lenten*, meagre, like food in Lent.

13. *and that may you be bold to say*, &c., a fool may well talk of 'fearing no colours', since he has never been where they are to be found, namely, in the wars.

21. *let summer bear it out*, let summer stand it out. He means, let summer help me to stand it out. It was common for vagrant serving-men to desert their employers when summer came round. They could live on less, and sleep out.

27. *That if one break*, &c. Maria plays on a meaning of 'points' now lost. 'Points' were laces with metal tags, by which the hose or breeches were fastened to the coat. Cp. I *Henry IV*, II. iv. 242: '*Fal.* Their points being broken,—*Poins.* Down fell their hose.'

28. *gaskins*, or 'galligaskins', were a kind of loose breeches.

33. *You were best.* Grammatically = it were best for you. 'You' is a dative come to be regarded as a nominative. So 'she were better' (II. ii. 27) = it were better for her, where the change from the dative to the nominative is plain.

38. *Quinapalus*. There was never any Quinapalus. The witty Clown parodies the learned. Cp. II. iii. 25–6.

45. *Go to, get away with you.*

a *dry fool*. In the same sense we talk of a ‘dry’ book.

46. *dishonest*. ‘Honest’ meant virtuous, and ‘dishonest’ the reverse. She refers to his absence from home.

47. *madonna*, my lady, madame (Ital., from *ma*, my, and *donna*, lady). Used by no one in Shakespeare but this clown.

51. *botcher*, patcher. Botchers are to tailors as cobblers to shoemakers.

56. *As there is no true cuckold*, &c. This is what Margaret Duchess of Newcastle, in her eulogy of Shakespeare (1664), called ‘mettled nonsense’. It means nothing, but it is amusing, because it wears the mock dress of reason, because of its ‘as . . . so’.

60. *Misprision in the highest degree*! An utter mistake for which you almost deserve hanging! A ‘misprision’ is a mistake, the taking a thing up wrong (O.Fr. *mesprendre*, Mod. *méprendre*). It was also used in law for any offence which fell short of being capital. The Clown plays on these two senses, as the legal addition ‘in the highest degree’ shows.

61. *cucullus non facit monachum*, ‘the cowl does not make the monk:’ a well-known proverb.

62. *I wear not motley in my brain*. The Clown infers that motley does not make the fool, that though he is dressed like a fool his wits may be sound. Professional fools like himself wore a special ‘motley’ or piebald dress.

65. *Dexteriously*, a form of ‘dexterously’.

69. *my mouse of virtue*. ‘Mouse’ was a familiar term of endearment, like ‘puss’. Cp. *Hamlet*, III. iv. 183: ‘Pinch wanton on your cheek: call you his mouse.’ The Clown risks something by going so far with his mistress; but he is in disgrace; it is hit or miss with him.

86. *I am no fox*. He implies that Malvolio is. The fox in Shakespeare is a synonym for craft and stealth.

93. *these set kind of fools*. ‘These kind of’ with a plural is still the idiom of conversation, e.g. ‘these kind of things.’ A ‘set’ fool is one whose business it is to be a fool, a professional.

95. *the fools’ zanies*, the fools’ understudies. A ‘zany’ was a fool who acted as comic understudy or foil to some other performer, like the clown in our circuses. Cp. Ben Jonson, *Every Man out of his Humour*, IV. i: ‘He’s like the zany to a tumbler That tries tricks after him, to make men laugh.’ The word is Italian, and has the force of our ‘Jack-pudding’ (*zanni*, a familiar form of *Giovanni*, John).

100. *bird-bolts*, a kind of blunt-headed arrows used for shooting birds.

101. *an allowed fool*, a licensed fool.

105. *Mercury endue thee with leasing*, Mercury endow thee with the gift of lying. The Clown hints that she is drawing the long-bow in her defence of fools.

The god Mercury to whom he appeals was held in classical mythology to be the peculiar patron of thieves and of all wily traffickers in goods. He was the father of Autolycus, the prince of thieves, and he

endowed Pandora, the first woman, with the gift of lying, which has never since been lost.

It may be noted that in Shakespeare 'endue' always means 'endow'.

114. *he speaks nothing but mudman.* So in *Henry V*, v. ii. 156: 'I speak to thee plain soldier.' This bold idiom grew naturally out of such sentences as 'He speaks plain cannon fire' (*King John*, ii. i. 462), or the familiar 'I will speak daggers to her' (*Hamlet*, iii. ii. 421).

123. *pia mater.* The medical name for the innermost membrane covering the brain; hence, as here, for the brain itself. The outermost membrane was called the *dura mater*.

127-8. *a plague o' those pickle herring!* Sir Toby had hiccupped or done something dreadful of the sort, and blames the herring for it.

How now, sot! The Clown had laughed, or made some sign of derision. 'Sot' means dunce, dolt; the original meaning (Fr. *sot*).

134. *marry.* A common exclamation, formerly an oath by the Virgin Mary.

135-6. Sir Toby speaks nothing but drunkard.

140. *above heat*, above what it takes to heat him.

142. *crowner*, coroner. Cp. *Hamlet*, v. i. 5: 'The crowner hath sat on her, and finds it Christian burial.'

147. *yond*, yon. The two words were used indifferently.

156. *Ha's* is 'he has', slurred.

157. *a sheriff's post.* It was the custom for the sheriff to have large posts set up at his door, to indicate his office and to serve as notice-boards.

the supporter to a bench. We infer that a sheriff's post had usually a bench propped against it.

169. *squash*, an unripe peascod.

170. *codling* or 'quodling' was the name of a hard kind of apple, not suitable to be eaten raw; hence, any immature or half-grown apple.

171. *in standing water*, in the condition of standing water, going neither one way nor another.

187. *con*, learn by heart. So to 'con without book' in ii. iii. 163-4.

188. *very comptible, even to the least sinister usage*, very responsive, very sensitive, even to the slightest harsh treatment. 'Comptible' is the same word as 'countable', and means literally accountable, answerable.

193. *modest*, moderate.

196. *my profound heart.* She calls Olivia 'my heart', which was a familiar form of address, and makes it ridiculous by adding 'profound', which is a mocking compliment to Olivia's sagacity in her attempt to penetrate the messenger's true character.

196-7. *by the very fangs of malice*, &c., i. e. let malice do its worst, it can say no more against me than that I am not the person I represent.

199, 200. *usurp.* 'Usurp' is to assume falsely, to take and hold against right. In l. 199 it has the first meaning: 'if I do not counterfeit myself.' In l. 200 it has the second meaning: 'You do most certainly hold on to yourself against all right.' For the first meaning, of 'counterfeit', cp. v. i. 260, and *Othello*, i. iii. 346: 'a usurped beard', i. e. a false one.

202. *from my commission*, away from my commission.

210. *It is the more like to be feigned.* (Cp. *As You Like It*, III. iii. 18-22 : 'Audrey. I do not know what "poetical" is. Is it honest in word and deed? Is it a true thing? Touchstone. No, truly, for the truest poetry is the most feigning.')

214. *'tis not that time of moon with me*, 'tis not my time of full moon, I am in no mind to be lunatic. The moon (especially at its full) has always been supposed to affect the mad. 'Lunatic' means literally 'moonstruck'.

215. *skipping*, flighty.

217. *swabber*. A 'swab' is a mop used for cleaning up the decks; the 'swabber' is the man who uses it.

to hull is to lie about with the head to the wind without any sail.

219. *Some mollification for your giant*. 'Ladies, in romance, are guarded by giants, who repel all improper or troublesome advances. Viola, seeing the waiting-maid so eager to oppose her revenge, intreats Olivia to pacify her giant' (Johnson). She has an eye also on Maria's diminutive size. (Cp. II. iii. 196 ('Penthesilea'); II. v. 16 ('the little villain'); III. ii. 73 ('the youngest wren of nine').)

221. *I am a messenger*. That is, I speak not my own mind, but that of my employer.

224. *courtesy*, preliminary ceremony.

225. *It alone concerns your ear*. (Cp. *Julius Caesar*, IV. iii. 93 : 'Revenge yourselves alone on Cassius' (i. e. on Cassius alone).)

226. *taxation*, claim, demand.

234. *maidenhead*, maidenhood, virginity.

Such a one I was as this present. 'Olivia speaks as if she were showing Viola her portrait' (Aldis Wright). That is why she uses the past tense. The original reading, 'Such a one I was this present,' is improved by inserting 'as', which may easily have been omitted after 'was'.

257. *'Tis in grain*. Her beauty is natural, of God's making; no painting or cosmetics. Her colour is 'in grain', it won't wash out.

263. *leave the world no copy*. (Cp. *Sonnets*, III, l. 14 : 'Die single, and thine image dies with thee.')

267. *indifferent*. Cp. I. iii. 145.

270. *praise*, appraise, value.

271. *I see you what you are*. Cp. I. ii. 51.

274-5. *Could be but recompensed*, &c. All your beauty, though it were throned as peerless, could be no more than a recompense for such owe as his.

276. The second 'with' is an insertion, to fill up the line.

281. *In voices well divulged*, by the public voice well and widely spoken of. 'Voices' is the voices of men. 'Divulged' has its proper meaning of 'spread abroad, made commonly known'.

291. *cantons*, songs, ballads. 'Canton' is a variant form of 'canto', in its original sense of song or ballad (Ital. *canto*, Lat. *cantus*, *canere*, to sing). This sense is to be distinguished from the other and more usual sense, in which it means one of the divisions of a long poem.

293. *reverberate*, reverberating; a rare use. *The New English Dic-*

tionary cites one other example, from Ben Jonson's *Masque of Blackness* (1605): 'reverberate glass' = reverberating glass. Cp. also *Hamlet*, I. i. 83: 'emulate' = emulous.

294. *the babbling gossip of the air*, Echo.

305. *no fee'd post*, no hired messenger. Cp. *Coriolanus*, v. v. 50: 'Your native town you entered like a post, And had no welcomes home.'

314. *give thee five-fold blazon*, give thee a five-fold coat of arms, i. e. proclaim thee a gentleman five times over.

315. *Unless the master were the man*, if only Orsino were Cesario.

322. *The county's man*, the Count's man, i. e. the Duke's. 'County,' 'Counte,' and 'Countee' for 'Count' were not uncommon. The final syllable represented the final -e of the original Anglo-French word, *counte*.

329-30. *fear to find Mine eye*, &c. She fears that her eyes, seduced, as she has just admitted, by the youth's attractions, may in their turn seduce her understanding.

331. *owe*, own. We are not our own masters, she says. This sense of 'owe' is frequent in Shakespeare.

ACT II, SCENE I. 1. *nor . . . not*. Double negatives of this sort are common in Elizabethan English. They emphasize the negative by repeating it. Cp. II. ii. 19 n., III. i. 168 n.

4-6. *My stars*, &c. Cp. I. iii. 142 n. 'Malignancy' = malignant aspect: said of a frowning planet.

12. *sooth*, truly, in truth. Usually 'in sooth', or 'in good sooth'.

12-13. *my determinate voyage is mere extravagancy*, the plan of travel I have fixed upon is mere roving vagrancy. He means that though he is bound to the Count Orsino's court (I. 46) he goes there with no object whatever. His only motive for the journey is that he must be moving, that he must go somewhere, anywhere away from that wretched coast.

'Extravagancy' has its original Latin sense of 'roaming out of bounds' (Lat. *extra*, out, beyond, *vagari*, to wander). Cp. *Hamlet*, I. i. 154: 'The extravagant and erring spirit' (i. e. vagrant and wandering).

15-16. *it charges me in manners the rather to express myself*, since you won't ask me ('the rather'), it is incumbent upon me in good manners to declare myself.

19. *Messaline* sounds so right and natural that we are surprised not to find it in the maps.

21. *both born in an hour*. Sebastian and Viola were twins.

24. *the breach of the sea*, the breakers. 'Breach' is a regular sea-term for the breaking of waves on a coast or over a vessel. *The New English Dictionary* quotes De Foe, *Robinson Crusoe*, chap. 3: 'She [the boat] would be dashed in pieces . . . by the breach of the sea.'

27. *was yet of many*, who was yet by many.

29. *with such estimable wonder*, with such estimating wonder, with such wonder as they expressed in their estimation of her beauty. The phrase is difficult, but this seems to be the sense. He means that a sister's beauty is too familiar to a brother to strike him with positive wonder.

31. 3. Sebastian speaks of his tears for his drowned sister as Laertes speaks of his. 'Too much of water hast thou, poor Ophelia, And therefore I forbid my tears' (*Hamlet*, iv. vii. 186-7). See further in the next note.

44. *the manners of my mother*. Cp. *Henry V*, iv. vi. 30-2: 'But I had not so much of man in me, And all my mother came into mine eyes And gave me up to tears.' This also is the language of Laertes. 'But yet,' he says, concluding the line quoted in the previous note, 'It is our trick, nature her custom holds, Let shame say what it will; when these are gone The woman will be out' (*Hamlet*, iv. vii. 187-90).

ACT II, SCENE II. 8. *a desperate assurance*, an assurance that will make him despair at last.

10. *hardy*, bold, daring (Fr. *hardi*). So 'hardiness' = bravery (*Henry V*, i. ii. 220). The word is now used not of bravery but of endurance. 'So hardy to' is ordinary Elizabethan for 'So hardy as to'.

13. *She took the ring of me*. Viola jumps to the business very nimbly. A clumsy person would have stammered or denied.

19. *Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!* 'Not' repeats, and thereby emphasizes, the negative idea in 'forbid'. This very natural idiom was common in Elizabethan English. Cp. *The Passionate Pilgrim*, 124: 'Forbade the boy he should not pass these bounds;' *Comedy of Errors*, iv. ii. 7: 'First he denied you had in him no right.'

21. *her eyes had lost her tongue*, had lost her her tongue, had caused her to lose it.

27. *She were better*. Cp. i. v. 33 n.

29. *the pregnant enemy*, the fertile, the resourceful enemy. That is, the devil, who is the father of wiles and the enemy of mankind. On 'pregnant' see further, III. i. 101 n.

30. *the proper-false*, false and fair ones, handsome deceivers. A 'proper' man is a handsome man. The hearts of women, says Viola, are like wax to the impression of such men.

34. *How will this fadge?* How will this fit? How will this suit? How is this to come off? 'Fadge' is a familiar word of unknown etymology.

35. *I, poor monster*: as it were, a woman-man or a man-woman.

fond, dote. The adjective 'fond', in its sense of dotingly tender, is here used as a verb. So Shakespeare uses 'coy' = be coy (*Coriolanus*, v. i. 6), 'gentle' = make gentle (*Henry V*, iv. iii. 63), 'safe' = make safe (*Antony and Cleopatra*, i. iii. 55), 'bold' = make bold (*King Lear*, v. i. 26), and indeed takes the liberty to make a verb of any part of speech, if the word happen to suit his purpose and satisfy his ear.

ACT II, SCENE III. 2. *diluculo surgere saluberrimum est*, to be up betimes is healthiest. It is a sentence in the standard school-book of the day, Lilly's Latin Grammar. Sir Toby leaves it unfinished, pretending to think that a scholar like Sir Andrew will of course be able to finish it for himself.

10. *Does not our life consist of the four elements?* This was a tradition centuries old. The four elements were earth, air, fire, and water. Since

these were the elements of nature, it followed, so our ancestors reasoned, that they must all four enter into the composition of man. The differences of temperament and character among men were to be explained by this, that the four elements were differently mixed or tempered (whence 'temperament') in different men.

These four elements, as they made themselves noticeable in men, had a special name. They were called 'humours'; and as there were four elements, so there were four humours: blood (air), choler (fire), phlegm (water), and melancholy or black bile (earth). The perfect temperament was one in which all four were equally mixed. This was the temperament which Antony found in Brutus, nor had he any higher praise to give him than this. 'His life was gentle, and the elements So mix'd in him that Nature might stand up And say to all the world, "This was a man!"' (*Julius Caesar*, v. v. 173-5). In the world of men, however, one of the four was nearly always found to predominate, so that either a man was sanguine (blood: air), or he was choleric (choler: fire), or phlegmatic (phlegm: water), or melancholy (melancholy or black bile: earth).

These were the popular notions of Shakespeare's time; and his language is often not to be understood unless they are known. It is for this reason that they are here set down in some order.

14. *stoup*, a drinking-cup.

17. *the picture of 'we three'*. 'Shakespeare had in his thoughts a common sign, in which two wooden heads are exhibited, with this inscription under it: "*We three* loggerheads be." The spectator or reader is supposed to make the third. The Clown means to insinuate, that Sir Toby and Sir Andrew had as good a title to the name of *fool* as himself' (Malone).

19. *catch*, part-song.

21. *breast*, voice. This was a regular expression. T. Warton quotes from some seventeenth-century statutes about choristers: 'Which said queristers, after their breasts are changed' (i. e. after their voices are broken).

25-6. *Pigrogromitus . . . the Vapians . . . the equinoctial of Queubus*. This nonsense is generally put down to the foolish knight, but it is nonsense beyond his reach. The names are too Rabelaisian to have been bred in his skull. The Clown must have been in his Quinapalus vein (i. v. 38), and the names are his names. It would be interesting to know where Shakespeare got them. They have not the air of being his own invention.

27. *leman*, sweetheart. Spelt 'lemon' in the original, which represents the pronunciation.

28. *impeticos thy gratillity*, a mixture of 'impocket thy gratuity' and 'petticoat thy gratuity': as if to say, I pocketed your gratuity and spent it on my petticoat companion.

28-30. *Malvolio's nose . . . bottle-ale houses*. The reader must take this for mere fooling, as Sir Andrew does. The Clown is pigrogromiting; he speaks the language of the Vapians.

37. *testril*, a tester, sixpence.

39. *a song of good life*, a song with a moral turn.

54. *Sweet and twenty*, sweet kisses and twenty of them. 'Twenty'

was proverbial in this sense. Malone compares *Merry Wives of Windsor*, II. i. 202-3: 'Good even and twenty, good Master Page!' (i. e. and twenty of them); and Aldis Wright *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, v. ii. 154-7: '*Daughter*. And shall we kiss too? *Woover*. A hundred times. *Daughter*. And twenty. *Woover*. Ay, and twenty.' The line might also be read, 'Then come kiss me, sweet, and twenty.' This would mean: 'Then come kiss me, sweet one, and twenty times.'

57-60. *contagious . . . contagion*. Sir Andrew cannot resist the gift of a word (see III. i. 98-103). Sir Toby, knowing this, deliberately plants 'contagious' in his way to have the pleasure of seeing him fall upon it.

61. *the welkin*, the sky: an old word (O.E. *wolcen*, cloud). See III. i. 66.

62-3. *a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver*. A humorous expression of the ravishing power of music. Cp. *Much Ado about Nothing*, II. iii. 61-3: 'Now, divine air! now is his soul ravished! Is 't not strange that sheeps' guts should hale souls out of men's bodies?'

When Sir Toby says 'weaver' he is thinking of weavers as starveling creatures from whom one soul apiece would be almost more than you could expect. He is thinking also, and chiefly, of the proverbial fondness of such people as weavers and tailors for singing: a natural amusement among men who sat all day at their work.

They had a preference for psalms and 'songs of good life'. Cp. I *Henry IV*, II. iv. 148: 'I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or anything.' But they did not by any means disdain a catch. We hear of one who 'got cold with sitting up late, and singing catches with cloth-workers' (Ben Jonson, *The Silent Woman*, III. ii).

65-6. *I am dog at a catch*, i. e. an adept at it. Cp. *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, IV. iv. 14: 'To be, as it were, a dog at all things.' The phrase has never quite gone out. It still lingers among the racy speakers at our Universities.

72. '*Hold thy peace, thou knave, knight?*' Clown asks if that is the song he means, giving the first line. As it was sung, in three parts, each called the other 'thou knave' in turn.

84-5. Sir Toby's epithets of abuse are chosen at random.

84. *Cathaian* is a form of 'Cathaian', a native of Cathay or China; hence a sharper, 'from the dexterous thieving of these people' (Nares). The tradition has not been lost. We have our 'heathen Chinee'.

politicians, schemers, intriguers. This was a regular early meaning of the word. In Shakespeare it has no other meaning. Cp. *Hamlet*, V. i. 85-6: 'a politician . . . one that would circumvent God.'

85. *a Peg-a-Ramsey*. There was a ballad of the time called Peg-a-Ramsey, and two tunes. Sir Toby likes the abusive sound of the name: that is all.

'*Three merry men be we*.' A well-known old song. It is cited as 'old' in 1595, in Peele's *Old Wives Tale*: 'Three merrie men, and three merrie men, And three merrie men be wee; I in the wood, and thou on the ground, And Jack sleepest in the tree' (Steevens).

87. *Tillygally*, a homely expression of contempt, like 'fiddle-de-dee'.

88. *There dwelt*, &c. Maria's 'my lady' reminds Sir Toby of this ballad, with its refrain of 'lady, lady!' See further, l. 112 n.

89. *Beshrew me*, plague upon me: a common playful oath.

99. *coziers' catches*. A 'cozier' was a cobbler. Cobblers seem to have been, like weavers and tailors, addicted to singing. See ll. 62-3 n. The reason is that they all sat at their work.

102. *Sneek up!* Go and hang yourself! The phrase is quite common in the comedies of the time, and this, or something very like it, must be the meaning.

105. *round*, plain, straightforward.

112. *Farewell, dear heart*, &c. The song here sung by Sir Toby and the Clown is given in full in Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* (vol. i, p. 200: Everyman's Library). It is called 'Corydon's Farewell to Phillis'. On the same page, in Percy's introductory note, the reader will find the first stanza of Sir Toby's 'There dwelt a man in Babylon' (l. 88).

124. '*Out o' time!*' Sir Toby, after this performance, recurs triumphantly to his first retort (l. 102). 'Out of time, indeed!'

125-6. *cakes and ale*. It was the custom on holidays and saints' days to make cakes in honour of the day. This the Puritans condemned as superstition.

The classical example of their frame of mind is the puritanical baker of Banbury, described by Ben Jonson in *Bartholomew Fair*, i. iii. '*Littlewit*. He was a baker, sir, but he does dream now, and see visions; he has given over his trade. *Quarulous*. I remember that too; out of a scruple he took, that (in spiced conscience) those cakes he made, were serv'd to Bridales, May-poles, Morrisses, and such profane feasts and meetings; his cristen-name is Zeal-of-the-land. *Little*. Yes, sir, Zeal-of-the-land Busy.'

Malvolio was suspected by Olivia's household of sharing these scruples. See l. 154.

130. *rub your chain with crumbs*. Malvolio, as steward, wore a gilt chain of office. To rub gilt plate with crumbs is the best way of cleaning it. The sentence is a bitter reminder to Malvolio that his home, when all is done, is in the servants' pantry.

134. *uncivil rule*, disorderly course of behaviour. As 'civil' meant orderly, decorous (lit. 'citizenlike': Lat. *civilis*), so 'uncivil' meant disorderly, indecorous. Cp. III. iv. 6, IV. i. 57.

135. *Go shake your ears*: like an ass.

137. *challenge him the field*, challenge him to the field, to single combat. Cp. 'This last Sunday *Moll Cut-purse*, a notorious baggage, that used to go in men's apparel, and challenged the field of diverse gallants, &c.' (from a letter written February 1612: quoted by Malone: see I. iii. 137 n.).

147. *a nayword*, a byword, a proverb. How it comes to mean this is uncertain. It occurs twice elsewhere in Shakespeare, with the meaning of a watchword or catchword.

151. *Possess us*, put us in possession of the matter, i.e. inform us, tell us about it.

155-6. 'Sir Andrew anticipates The Shortest Way with the Dissenters' (Aldis Wright).

163. *time-pleaser*. We say 'time-server'.

affected, affected. 'Affection' = affectation is found so late as Sheridan, in his *School for Scandal* (1776): 'The very gross affection of good nature' (I. i.).

cons state without book, gets by heart the maxims of stately deportment. For 'con without book' cp. I. v. 87 n.

utters it, comes out with it, passes it off on the public. This sense survives in the phrase 'to utter false coin', meaning to pass it off, to put it in circulation.

by great swarths, in great heaps or bundles. A 'swarth' is a 'swath', a row of mown grass.

165. *persuaded of himself*, i.e. of his own merits.

174. *expressure*, expression. So 'impressure' = impression, II. v. 105.

186-7. This slender jest has been thought too clever for poor Sir Andrew, whom 'many did call fool'. But we will not give it to Sir Toby.

188. *Ass*. Maria puns on 'Ass' and 'As', like Hamlet: 'And many such-like 'As'es of great charge' (V. ii. 43).

196. *Penthesilea* was queen of the Amazons. This is one of the jests at Maria's size. Cp. I. v. 219 n.

197. *Before me*. A mild version of 'Before God'.

203. *recover*, get, obtain. The word was used freely in this sense, with no idea, such as it has now, that the thing obtained had been lost. In *The Tempest*, III. ii. 16, Stephano boasts that he swam five-and-thirty leagues before he could 'recover' (i.e. get to) Prospero's island.

204. *out*, out of pocket. The knight was heavily overdrawn. See III. ii. 61.

206. *call me cut*. A phrase of the time. 'Cut' was a familiar name for a common draught horse, and was used freely as a term of abuse. It meant probably 'cut-tail', dock-tailed. The carrier's horse in *1 Henry IV* is called Cut (II. i. 6).

210. *burn some sack*. Sack was an old Spanish wine much in favour at this time, especially 'burnt' or mulled. To 'burn' wine was to make it hot; but spices, sugar, &c., were probably added.

ACT II, SCENE IV. 3. *antique*, old-fashioned.

5. *recollected terms* are phrases picked up, remembered, and reproduced, in contrast to the direct untutored language of the heart. The love poetry of Shakespeare's time is crammed with 'recollected terms', picked up from the French and Italian poets and in a few years (as is the fate of such things) hackneyed into a convention.

18. *motions* is not to be translated 'emotions'. The idea is simpler, more physical. 'Motions' are the movements within us, whether of the senses or of the spirits. Cp. I. 100 below: 'motion of the liver'; and *Measure for Measure*, I. iv. 59: 'The wanton stings and motions of the sense.' You could not write 'emotions of the sense', still less 'emotions of the liver'.

21-2. *the seat Where love is thron'd*, the heart. Cp. I. i. 38.

24. *favour*, countenance. We still say 'well-favoured', and in Scotland 'weel-faur'd'. In l. 25 Viola uses the word with intentional ambiguity.

30. *so wears she to him*: as if she were a coat or a glove, to grow to the shape of her owner.

31. *No sways she level*, &c., i. e. equably, with no ups and downs of affection.

37. *Cannot hold the bent*, cannot keep up tension, must relax. 'Bent' means the extent to which a bow may be 'bent' or a spring wound up, degree of tension. (Cp. *Hamlet*, III. ii. 408: 'They fool me to the top of my bent' (i. e. to the full stretch of my inclination).

44. *spinsters* are women who spin.

45. *free*, free from care, light-hearted, easy in mind.
weave their thread with bones, weave bone-lace. 'Bones' were a sort of bobbins, made of trotter bones, for weaving bone-lace (Johnson's *Dict.*, quoted *N.E.D.*).

46. *silly sooth*, simple truth. For 'sooth' cp. II. i. 12, &c. Silly' which at first meant happy or blessed, came to mean innocent, harmless, simple, and finally, foolish. Shakespeare uses it in all its meanings but the first. The well-known phrases, 'silly sheep' and 'silly women', which occur in Shakespeare, do not mean that the sheep and the women are foolish, but that they are innocent or helpless. The man 'in a silly habit' in *Cymbeline*, v. iii. 86, is a man in a plain and simple dress, not in a foolish one.

48. *Like the old age*, like the olden times; as they did in the good old days when men were simple. Cp. *Sonnets*, cxxvii. 1: 'In the old age black was not counted fair.'

52. *sad cypress*, a coffin of black cypress-wood. Cypress and yew have always been funereal trees.

57-8. *My part of death . . . share it*. 'Though death is a part in which every one acts his share, yet of all these actors no one is so true as I' (Johnson).

73. *Give me now leave to leave thee*. The Duke is the pink of courtesy. This is his way of saying that the Clown may go.

75. *the melancholy god*, the god of melancholy.

76. *doublet*. Doublets were worn with sleeves and without. With sleeves they were like our jackets; without sleeves, like our waistcoats.
changeable taffeta was a kind of changeable-coloured silk.

77. *opal*. Opals change colour in different lights. 'In the opal you shall see the burning fire of the carbuncle or rubie, the glorious purple of the amethyst, the green sea of the emerald, and all glittering together mixed after an incredible manner' (Philemon Holland's translation of Pliny's *Natural History*: quoted by Steevens).

77-80. The Clown is a good physician. Seeing the Duke to be melancholy and overstrung, he recommends a sea-voyage to take his mind off himself.

81. *give place*, withdraw. Cp. I. 126.

82. *yond*. Cp. I. v. 147.

cruelly. Cp. I. v. 309.

84. *dirty lands*. It is not her estates he is after.

86. *giddily*, carelessly, lightly.

87, 88. *that miracle*, &c., her beauty. 'Miracle' goes with 'gems'.

95. *There is*. A singular verb (especially 'there is') preceding a plural subject is common in Shakespeare. The reason of the idiom is that the verb comes out while the precise form of the subject is still unsettled. Here, 'there is no woman' is the first idea, and then, 'no woman's sides.' Cp. *Cymbeline*, IV. ii. 371: 'There is no more such masters.'

100. *motion of the liver*. On 'motion' see l. 18 n. On 'liver' see l. i. 37 n. The Duke's mind was indeed an opal. In II. 32-5 he had said just the opposite.

101. *cloyment*, cloying: a word coined for the occasion.

105. *owe*, have for, bear. So l. 107. This follows from 'owe' = have, possess, as in l. v. 331.

114. *thought*, pensiveness, brooding. Cp. *Antony and Cleopatra*, III. xiii. 1: "'What shall we do . . . ?'" "Think, and die."

116-17. *like Patience on a monument Smiling at grief*. To the world she was no more than this, a quiet figure with a patient smile.

126. *can give no place*, cannot retire an inch. (Cp. l. 81.

denay, denial (OFr. *dénoi*, another form of *déni*, from which comes 'deny').

ACT II, SCENE V. 1. *Come thy ways*, come along. Sometimes 'come on thy ways', less often 'come thy way'.

2. *a scruple*, the least fraction. We say 'a grain', which is the twentieth part of a scruple.

6. *sheep-biter*. A 'sheep-biter' is a vicious dog which bites sheep: hence a term of abuse.

15. *it is pity of our lives*, it is a pity about our lives; our lives are to be pitied. In this common phrase 'of' = in respect to, about. Cp. Chapman, *Blind Beggar* (1598), i. 38: 'Twas pittie of his nose, for he would have beene a fine man else' (quoted *N.E.D.*).

18. *my metal of India*, my golden girl, my lass of gold. India was by long tradition the land of gold and precious stones. Cp. *Henry VIII*, I. i. 18-22: 'To-day the French All clinquant, all in gold, like heathen gods, Shone down the English; and to-morrow they Made Britain India: every man that stood Show'd like a mine.'

24. *Close*, keep close, keep out of sight.

26, 27. *trout . . . tickling*. 'This fish loveth flatterie: for, being in the water, it will suffer itself to be rubbed and clawed, and so to be taken' (Cogan's *Haven of Health*, 1595: quoted by Steevens).

30. *fancy*, love. Cp. I. i. 14.

36. *jets*, struts.

advanced, raised, uplifted. (Cp. *Tempest*, I. ii. 405: 'The fringed curtains of thine eye advance' (i.e. raise your eyelids). We still talk of 'advancing' standards in battle.

38. '*Slight*, short for 'God's light!'

45. *the lady of the Strachy*. 'Strachy' in the original is printed as a proper name, but who or what is meant by it nobody has discovered. The only thing that is clear is this, that in station she was considerably above her husband, the officer of the wardrobe.

49. *blows him*, puffs him up.

51. *my state*, my chair of state. A 'state' was a chair with a canopy over it. Originally the 'state' was the canopy itself. (Cp. *Coriolanus*, v. iv. 22: 'He sits in his state, as a thing made for Alexander'.)

52. *stone-bow*, a cross-bow, a bow which shoots stones.

55. *branched*, figured with patterns of foliage. In architecture, 'branched work' is the name for carved foliage on friezes and monuments.

60. *to have the humour of state*, to be the great man, to have the grand air. If we may believe Maria, Malvolio had trained for this (II. iii. 164).

61. *after a demure travel of regard*, after allowing my gaze to travel with a grave composure from one to another.

67. *with my* —. He was going to say 'with my chain', forgetting that he would be no longer steward. This is the best explanation of the original: 'with my some rich jewel.'

68. *curtsies*. Curtsying was then used by both sexes.

71-2. *with cars*, with carts, with wagons; the same idea as the 'oxen and wain-ropes' of III. ii. 66. This sense of 'car' was common and lasting. The *New English Dictionary* quotes the Bible, I Esdras v. 55 (1611): 'They gave carres that they should bring Cedar trees from Libanus'; and a writer of 1750 who speaks of 'carrs or carts'.

Many suggestions have been made by editors on the supposition that 'cars' is a misprint. Dr. Johnson's 'with carts' is unnecessary, since this is the meaning of the text. Of the others only Hanmer's is reasonable: that 'with cars' should be 'by the ears' (bi' th' ears).

75. *an austere regard of control*, a look of austere control. 'Of control' is adjectival, qualifying 'regard'. This is a favourite device of Shakespeare to avoid the goose-file of epithets: as, 'an austere and controlling regard.' He gets his noun in the centre, flanks it on both wings, and ends on the emphatic word. The result is compactness, emphasis, variety. (Cp. III. ii. 80 ('impossible passages of grossness').)

91. *employment*, business.

93. *Now is the woodcock near the gin*. The woodcock was a silly bird, often used as a decoy. 'Gin' means trap, snare (an abbreviation of 'engine').

95. *intimate*, suggest.

98. *in contempt of question*, beyond all question, so that to question it would be absurd.

103. *To the unknown beloved*, &c. The curious reader will observe that in these words there is neither a C nor a P.

104. *By your leave*, *wax*. He asks its permission to break it.

Soft! He holds his hand for a moment to observe the seal.

105. *impressure*, impression. Cp. 'expressure' = expression, II. iii. 173.

her Lucrece, a head of Lucrece was a favourite design for seals and signet rings. Lucretia was a Roman matron of the days when Rome was still ruled by kings. She was dishonoured by a prince of the reigning house of Tarquin, and committed suicide. The Tarquins were driven out, Rome became a Republic, and Lucretia was established a type of chastity to the world.

107. *laver and all*. See I. i. 37 n., and cp. II. iv. 100.

112. *the numbers*, the verse, the metre. When Pope was a boy, it may be remembered, he 'lisp'd in numbers'.

115. *broek*, badger, i. e. stinking dirty fellow, 'skunk.'

117. *a Lucrece knife*. See I. 105 n.

120. *fastan*, pompously commonplace ('fustian' being a common coarse cloth).

125. *What dish*, &c. We say 'What a dish.' Cp. *Julius Cæsar*, I. iii. 42: 'what night is this!' (what a night is this!).

126. *staniel*. Another name for the kestrel, a worthless kind of hawk. 'It was lacking in courage, and was allotted by the old writers to the knave or servant' (Madden, *Diary of Master William Silewe*, p. 153).

checks at it. A hawk was said to 'check' when she forsook her proper game, to pursue some other that came in sight.

131. *any formal capacity*, any normal capacity. 'Formal' means according to recognized form or rule, and so normal. Cp. *Comedy of Errors*, v. i. 104-5: 'With wholesome syrups, drugs, and holy prayers, To make of him a formal man again.'

135. *at a cold scent*, snuffing about like a hound when the scent fails.

137-8. *Sowter will cry upon 't*, will pick out the scent again. Sowter is a name for a hound. Hounds are silent while they are searching for the scent, and give tongue when they find it.

though it be as rank as a fox, though it be crossed by a scent as rank as the scent of a fox. So Mr. Vice-Chancellor Madden, who has no equal in these matters. Sowter is 'an Elizabethan running-hound, in pursuit of the favourite quarry of the day—the hare—foiled by the rank scent of the vermin fox' (*Diary*, 1907, p. 344). The praise is of course ironical. No complication can baffle such a hound, says Fabian; he will pick out the true scent whatever happens.

142. *faults*. A 'fault' or 'cold fault' is the same thing as a 'cold scent' (I. 135).

145. *suffers under probation*, breaks down on trial.

156. *are*, for 'is': ordinary conversational inaccuracy, due to the intervening plural, 'letters.'

158. *In my stars, in my fortunes*. Cp. I. iii. 142 n.

164. *Be opposite with a kinsman*, be hostile, be contradictory with him. Cp. III. ii. 71; III. iv. 256, 297 ('opposite' = adversary). 'A kinsman' is of course Sir Toby, as Malvolio sees.

165. *tang, twang*.

the trick of singularity: which in vulgar opinion is one of your true signs of greatness. Cp. *The Winter's Tale*, IV. iii. 780 (the Clown on Autolycus): 'He seems to be more noble in being fantastical: a great man, I'll warrant; I know by the picking on's teeth.'

169. *yellow stockings*: a sixteenth-century fashion which went out in James I's time.

170. *cross-gartered*, 'not like a stage bandit, but wearing the garters both above and below the knee, so as to be crossed at the back of the leg' (Aldis Wright). This fashion also decayed in James I's time.

175. *Daylight and champion*, broad daylight and open country. 'Champion' and 'champion' are variant forms of 'champaigne',

meaning an expanse of level country. They occur first in the sixteenth century, and in the seventeenth century were the normal forms in use.

176. *politic*, who deal with policy, with matters of state.

baffle, disgrace, treat with contumely. This general meaning followed from the technical sense of the word. To 'baffle' a knight was strictly to declare him perjured, 'and then they make of him an image painted reverted with his heels upward' (Hall, *Chronicles*, 1548; quoted *N.E.D.*). Cp. 1 *Henry IV*, I. ii. 113 (Sir John Falstaff): 'an I do not, call me a villain and baffle me.'

178. *point-devisé*, scrupulously, precisely (earlier English 'at point devys', from Old Fr. *à point devis*=arranged or devised to a proper point, arranged scrupulously or to perfection).

the very man, the very man described in the letter.

179. *jade me*, play the jade with me.

186. *strange*, distant. He is thinking of Sir Toby.

187. *stout*, stiff and proud. He is thinking of the servants.

188. *even with the swiftness of putting on*. A biblical turn of phrase which gives support to Maria's contention: 'Marry, sir, sometimes he is a kind of puritan' (II. iii. 153).

189. *Jove and my stars be praised!* This, on the other hand, is more suitable to a pagan than a Puritan. He thanks Jove again in I. 195. No doubt Shakespeare, when he wrote the play, wrote 'God', and 'God' was changed to 'Jove' at some later time in conformity with the law of 1606 against the profane use of God's name on the stage. Cp. III. iv. 84, 92; IV. ii. 13.

198. *a pension of thousands to be paid from the Sophy*. The Sophy was the Shah of Persia (Pers. *Safi*, used as a title, A. D. 1505-1736). The wealth and munificence of the Sophy had been brought home to Englishmen, about the time when this play was written, by the travels of three brothers, Sir Robert, Sir Anthony, and Sir Thomas Shirley, to the Persian court, and their splendid reception there. An account of their experiences was printed in 1600.

210. *tray-trip*, some sort of game with dice.

216. *aqua-vitæ*, 'eau-de-vie,' brandy.

227. *Tartar*, Tartarus, the Hell of the ancients.

ACT III, SCENE I. 1. *Save thee*, God save thee: a common greeting. So I. 77, &c.

2. *thy tabor*. A 'tabor' was a small side-drum. Pipe and tabor were part of the stock-in-trade of the professional clown.

4. *a churchman*, an ecclesiastic.

9. *lies*, lodges, dwells.

14. *cheveril*, kid-leather (Old Fr. *chevrele*, a kid), proverbial for its flexibility. In *Henry VIII*, II. iii. 32, we read of a 'cheveril conscience'.

25. *words . . . bonds*. He hits at lawyers.

45. *the orb*, the globe (Lat. *orbis terrarum*). Cp. 'the orb o' the earth' (*Coriolanus*, V. vi. 127).

50. *pass upon me*, pass judgement upon me: a common phrase, still in use. So *Measure for Measure*, II. i. 23: 'thieves do pass on thieves'.

51. *expenses*, his expenses as judge or juryman, his fee.

52. *commodity*, cargo, consignment.

57-9. Cp. *Venus and Adonis*, 768: 'Gold that's put to use more gold begets.' 'Use' = usury, interest.

60-1. *Pandarus . . . Cressida . . . Troilus*. The love-affair of Cressida and Prince Troilus of Troy is the subject of Chaucer's best poem and of Shakespeare's strangest play. Pandarus was Cressida's uncle, and acted as go-between, to bring them together. The Clown means that having got one coin, he would willingly couple it with another.

64. *Cressida was a beggar*. The fate of Cressida after she deserted Troilus (for she gave herself to Diomedes the Greek) is no part of Chaucer's subject. It is the subject of a later poem, *The Testament of Cresseid*, by the fifteenth-century Scottish poet, Robert Henryson. He represents her as abandoned by Diomedes, and sentenced by heaven to live like a beggar and a leper for the rest of her days.

65. *conster*, construe, explain.

66-7. *welkin . . . element*. 'Welkin' means sky (see II. iii. 61). So, sometimes, does 'element' (e.g. in I. i. 26). The Clown is by profession a 'corrupter of words'. He resents 'element', as stale and past corruption. Instead of saying 'out of my element', therefore, which is what he means, he says 'out of my welkin'.

72-3. *like the haggard*, &c. A 'haggard' is a wild untrained hawk. For 'cheek', cp. II. v. 126 n. The meaning is that he must be ready to catch at everything that turns up, and make his jest upon it, as the wild hawk will 'cheek' or turn aside to pursue any bird that comes her way.

75-6. Folly in a fool is fit and proper, and may show his wisdom; but when wise men fall to folly they do nothing but damage the reputation of their wits.

79-81. *Dieu vous garde*, &c. In I. iii. 99 Sir Andrew seems not to understand what *pourquoi* means. Here he speaks French and understands it. Shall we, with Theobald, give II. 79 and 81 to Sir Toby, and compensate Sir Andrew with I. 77? Or shall we, with Malone, defend the text on the ground that Sir Andrew was a picker up of phrases (see II. 99, 102-3 below), and might have learned by rote from Sir Toby the few French words here spoken? Or shall we decide for ourselves that Shakespeare, in the third Act, forgot about *pourquoi* in the first? I incline to think that Shakespeare forgot.

82. *encounter*. Sir Toby's 'encounter' and 'taste' (see I. 89 n.) sound like a parody of Elizabethan coterie slang: the slang not of streets and taverns, but of clubs and circles of superior persons.

85. *trade*, business. Cp. *Hamlet*, III. ii. 354: 'Have you any further trade with us?' Viola accepts his language, and replies in the style of a merchant adventurer.

87. *list*, bound, limit; or, as Viola twists it, terminus. 'List' is better known in the plural, as the name for the enclosed ground where tournaments were held.

89. *Taste*, try. Cp. III. iv. 271. There was an inclination to use this word affectedly. Chapman, in his translation of the *Odyssey*, says of one trying his bow that he began to 'taste' it.

96. *prevented*, anticipated: the original meaning (Lat. *præ*, before; and *venire*, to come).

101. *pregnant*, ready, responsive. This meaning followed from the stricter meanings of 'fertile', 'resourceful', for which see II. ii. 29 *n*.

122. *music from the spheres*. It was an old idea that the stars, as they revolved in their spheres or orbits, produced by their motion an unearthly music. This music—too perfectly harmonious to be heard by the gross ears of men—was called 'the music of the spheres'.

124. *beseech you*. In this phrase 'I' was generally omitted.

130. *What might you think?* What could you think? 'May' and 'might' were then used as 'can' and 'could' are now. Cp. *Hamlet*, I. i. 56: 'Before my God, I might not this believe Without the sensible and true avouch Of mine own eyes.'

131-3. *at the stake*, &c. Olivia talks the language of bear-baiting. She thinks of her honour as a bear tied to the stake and baited by a pack of dogs. So Macbeth, at his last stand: 'They have tied me to a stake; I cannot fly But bear-like I must fight the course' (*Macbeth*, v. vii. 1-2).

133. *receiving*, receptiveness, ready apprehension.

134. *a cypress*, a kerchief of cypress or lawn of Cyprus, which was a material resembling crape. Olivia wore it in mourning for her brother. It was light and transparent, and did not conceal the throbbing of her bosom.

138. *a grize* is a step. So, strictly, is a 'degree' (I. 137); and Olivia's 'degree' suggested Viola's 'grize'. For 'degree' in its original sense of step, cp. *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 25-7: 'He then unto the ladder turns his back, . . . scorning the base degrees By which he did ascend.' The two words have indeed the same root: 'grize' goes back to Latin *gressus*, and 'degree' to Latin *gradus*.

a vulgar proof, a thing of common experience. So in *Julius Caesar*, in the passage just referred to: 'Tis a common proof, That lowliness is young ambition's ladder' (II. i. 21).

148. *due west*. A moment ago the sun of his favour was in its meridian; now, as the clock strikes, she bids it sink in the west.

westward-ho! This was a cry of the watermen on the Thames. Aldis Wright quotes Peele's *Edward I* (1590-1): '*Queen Elinor*. [A cry of "*Westward ho!*"] Woman, what noise is this I hear? *Potter's Wife*. An like your grace, it is the watermen that call for passengers to go westward now.'

165. *maugre*, in spite of (O.Fr. *maugré*, Mod. *malgré*).

168. *For that*, since that.

nor never none shows the rhetorical value of repeated negatives. Cp. II. i. 1 *n*.; II. ii. 19 *n*.

ACT III, SCENE II. 3. *dear venom*, my warm, my heated friend. He mocks at Sir Andrew's mock virulence.

15. *Slight*. Sir Andrew said this before, in II. v. 38.

30. *into the north*. She will now think coldly of him.

31. *like an icicle on a Dutchman's beard*. In fertile minds one figure breeds another. 'Sailing into the north' suggested icicles and exploration; icicles and exploration suggested the Dutchman's beard. The Dutch were at this time the first explorers in Europe. In 1596 a Dutchman had discovered Nova Zembla. By 1600, the year in which this

play was written, the discovery had made its way into the maps.
See I. 88 n.

36. *a Brownist*, 'a follower of Robert Browne, an English Puritan and Nonconformist, who about 1581 advocated a certain system of church-government. His principles, somewhat modified, became those of the Independents under the Commonwealth' (N.E.D.). Sir Andrew's opinion of Puritans we knew before (II. iii. 155).

a politician. See II. iii. 84 n.

37. *budd me*, &c. This use of 'me' was a common colloquial idiom. It gave vividness by fixing attention on the speaker. Cp. III. iv. 197.

41. *love-broker*, love-agent, professional match-maker.

47. *a martial hand, a bold soldierly hand*.

carst, crabbed, cantankerous. 'Curst' is the same word as 'cursed'.

50. *with the licence of ink*, with all the freedom which pen and ink allow.

51. *if thou thou'st him some thrice*. This was a great licence to take. The prime example of it is the passage which Theobald quoted from Attorney-General Coke's indecent and virulent attack on Sir Walter Raleigh at his trial in 1603: 'All that he did was by thy instigation, thou viper; for *I thou thee, thou traitor!* . . . Thou art a monster; thou hast an English face, but a Spanish heart . . . Thou hast a Spanish heart, and thyself art a spider of hell.'

53. *the bed of Ware in England*: 'an enormous bed, capable of holding twelve persons, now [1885] to be seen at the Rye-House. It was ten feet nine inches square, and seven feet and a half high, and till about ten years since [1875] was in the Saracen's Head Inn at Ware' (Aldis Wright).

59. *the cubiculo*. By 'the cubicle' Sir Andrew's lodgings are meant: the place where he 'lay'.

61. *some two thousand strong*. See II. iii. 201-8.

66. *wain-ropes*, waggon-ropes.

69. *his liver*. Much blood in the liver meant courage. To be white-livered was to be a coward.

71. *opposite*, opponent. Cp. II. v. 164 n.

73. *the youngest wren of nine*. Another joke at Maria's diminutive size. 'The wren generally lays nine or ten eggs at a time, and the last hatch'd of all birds are usually the smallest' (Steevens). Now the wren at its biggest is one of the tiniest of birds.

75. *the spleen*, a fit of the spleen. Immoderate laughing was thought to enlarge the spleen.

77. *renegade*, renegade, apostate from the faith: the original Spanish form in its original meaning. It was used especially of a Christian who 'turned Turk' and became a Mohammedan.

80. *can ever believe such impossible passages of grossness*, can ever put his belief (as he does) in such gross and impossible goings on. For the construction of the phrase see II. v. 75 n. 'Passages' are things that 'pass', go on, occur: incidents, proceedings (e.g. 'they talked over old passages in their lives').

84. *pedant*, pedagogue.

85. *keeps a school in the church*. It was not uncommon to have a school in the parish church.

88. *the new map with the augmentation of the Indies*. It is very probable that the 'new map' is the map issued in some copies of the enlarged edition of Hakluyt's *Voyages* (1599-1600). This map represents the East Indies in more detail than any previous map. It includes also the recently discovered islands of Nova Zembla (see l. 31 n.). I should imagine, putting ll. 31 and 88 together, that Shakespeare had just come across the map, or had just been hearing about the new things in it, at the time when he was writing this scene.

ACT III, SCENE III. 8. *jealousy*, suspicion, apprehension.

15. *thanks*; *for*. These two words have been inserted to fill up a gap in the original line: 'And thanks; and ever . . . oft good turns.'

16. *such uncurrent pay*. Thanks are not current payment; they won't buy a man anything.

17. *were my worth*, &c. His 'worth' is what he is worth, in worldly goods. Were my fortunes as substantial, he says, as my consciousness of what I owe to you is firm.

19. *reliques*, remains, antiquities; the 'memorials' of l. 23.

24. *Would you'd pardon me*, i.e. I would, &c. Cp. 'beseech you' (III. i. 124).

26. *the Count his galleys*, the Count's galleys. 'His' was often used for 's', which was regarded as a contraction of 'his'. It was really a contraction of the old English possessive ending '-es'.

28. *it would scarce be answer'd*, it would be hard for me to meet the charge.

32. *bloody argument*, ground for bloodshed. Cp. l. 12 above ('arguments' = grounds).

33. *answer'd*, made up for.

36. *lapsed*. If this is the ordinary verb it gives no sense. The *New English Dictionary* suggests that it is not. There was a phrase, 'to fall into the lap of,' 'to fall into the laps of' = to come within the reach, or into the power of. Now 'laps' was sometimes written 'lapse'. It is therefore very possible that 'lapsed' is not the ordinary verb, but a verb formed from 'lapse' = 'laps' in the phrase above. The meaning then is: pounced upon as an offender, apprehended.

40. *diet*, food.

41. *Whiles* and 'while' were used indifferently.

42. *have me*, find me.

46. *idle markets*. Sebastian had no loose money to spend on trifles.

ACT III, SCENE IV. 1. *he says he'll come*. If the text is right this must be a supposition: 'suppose he says he'll come.'

2. *of*, on.

5. *sad*, grave: not necessarily sorrowful. Cp. ll. 21, 82 below.

6. *civil*, decorous. See II. iii. 134 n.

11-12. *your ladyship were best*: on the analogy of 'you were best', for which see I. v. 33 n.

26. '*Please one and please all*.' Part of the title of a ballad registered for publication in 1592. There is one copy in existence.

72. *do you come nearer me now?* do you make me out now? do you take me now?

81. *consequently*, as a sequel, in accordance therewith.

82. *and*. Cp. I. 5.

83. *sir*, for 'gentleman'.

84. *limed her*, caught her (as a bird is caught with birdlime).

Love's . . . *Love*. So I. 72. Cp. II. v. 189 n.

86. *follow*? This word had still some of the sense of 'companion and equal' which it has now almost lost.

88. *scruple*. Malvolio puns. Cp. II. v. 2. In apothecaries' measure 3 scruples are 1 dram.

90. *no incredulous* . . . *circumstance*, no circumstance to make me incredulous, to shake my faith. For this unusual active sense of the adjective, cp. *Macbeth*, v. iii. 43: 'oblivious antidote' (an antidote that causes oblivion).

96. *drawn in little*. To 'draw in little' was to draw in miniature. Hamlet talks of his uncle's 'picture in little' (II. iii. 392). Sir Toby, however, playing with the phrase, means 'drawn into little', 'compressed or packed into little.'

Legion. When Christ was in the country of the Gadarenes he was met by a man possessed with an unclean spirit. He asked the spirit, 'What is thy name?' and the spirit answered, 'My name is Legion: for we are many' (Mark v. 9).

103. *private*, privacy: an uncommon use.

114. *La you!* means Lo you! Look you! It is the same expression as the familiar 'la, now!' of servant-maids in Dickens and *Punch*.

127. *my bawcock*, my fine fellow (from Fr. *beau coq*).

128. *chuck*, chick. Cp. Pistol's playful remonstrance to Fluellen in *Henry V.* III. ii. 27: 'Good bawcock, bate thy rage; use lenity, sweet chuck!'

130. *Biddy come with me*. He addresses Malvolio as a 'chuck'! 'Come, Bid, come, are words of endearment used by children to chickens' (Steevens).

131. *cherry-pit* is a silly game. You try to pitch cherry-stones into a little hole.

132. *foul collier!* 'The devil is called *Collier* from his blackness; *Like will to like*, says the *Devil to the Collier* [a proverb]' (Johnson).

140. *element*. Cp. III. ii. 67.

146. *take air, and taint*, get about and grow stale.

in a dark room, and bound. The treatment of lunatics up to the end of the eighteenth century is one of the disgraces of our ancestors. Cp. *As You Like It*, III. ii. 427: 'Love is merely a madness, and, I tell you, deserves as well a dark house and a whip as madmen do.'

156. *crown thee for a finder of madmen*. He puns on 'crown' and 'crowner' (coroner), on 'finder' (discoverer) and 'finding' (a verdict).

159. *matter for a May morning*, i.e. matter for sport. Until the Puritans took hold of England May morning and May day were one long revel.

170. *note*, remark.

186. *He may have mercy upon mine*. He means, 'I may be killed.'

195. *commerce*, intercourse.

by and by, presently.

197. *scout me*. Cp. III. ii. 37 n.

198. *bum-bailly*, bum-bailiff, a sheriff's officer.

202. *approbation*, testimony.

proof, probation, actual trial.

218. *like cockatrices*. The cockatrice was a legendary creature, half cock, half serpent, which killed with a glance of its eye.

220. *give them way*, make way for them, let them proceed.

221. *presently*, instantly.

225. *unchary*, uncharily, freely.

229. *haviour*, carriage, deportment. 'Haviour' originally meant 'possession' (Fr. *avoir*), but was gradually assimilated to the meaning of 'behaviour'.

230. *Goes . . . grieves*. We expect 'grief', but see II. iv. 95 *n.* and cp. *Tempest*, I. i. 18: 'What cares these roarers for the name of king?'

247. *Dismount thy tuck*: a way of saying 'take your rapier off its hangers'. These hangers or straps attaching the rapier to the belt are by Osric called 'carriages' (*Hamlet*, v. ii. 158), whence Sir Toby's 'dismount'.

tuck, a small rapier (Fr. *estoc*).

248. *yare*, ready, nimble (O.E. *gearo*, ready, prepared). Cp. *Tempest*, I. i. 4-7: 'fall to 't yarely . . . cheerly, my hearts! yare! yare!'

256. *opposite*. Cp. III. ii. 71.

260. *dubbed with unhatched rapier*, with unhacked rapier; i.e. not for exploits in the field. 'Hatch' is from Fr. *hacher*, to cut, hack, draw lines upon metal.

261. *on carpet consideration*, on such grounds as carpet knights are made on. A carpet knight is one made at home, in time of peace.

266. *Hob, nob* means here 'give or take'. It is a form of *hab nab*, and means literally 'have or have not'.

269. *conduct*, escort.

271. *taste*. Cp. III. i. 89.

295. *proof*. Cp. I. 203.

297. *opposite*. Cp. III. ii. 71.

301. *with sir priest than sir knight*. She is for a peaceable life. 'Sir' was a courtesy title given to priests, as persons presumably holding a University degree. It represented the academical *Dominus*. Cp. Sir Topas the curate, IV. ii. 2; Sir Oliver Martext in *As You Like It*, &c.

305. *virago*. A word of Sir Toby's for a male virago.

306. *stuck*, thrust: a fencing term, from Italian *stoccata*.

307. *mortal motion*, deadly action. People spoke of a fencer's 'motion' as we speak of a bowler's 'action'. Cp. *Hamlet*, IV. vii. 100: 'the scrimers [i.e. fencers] of their nation. He swore, had neither motion, guard, nor eye, If you opposed them.'

the answer, the return hit: another fencing term.

310. *the Sophy*. Cp. II. v. 199 *n.*

315. *and*, if. 'And' in this sense is in modern editions usually printed 'an', to avoid confusion with its other sense. But 'and', not 'an', was the prevailing form in Shakespeare's age. 'Except in *an*'t, *an* is found only once in the First Folio of Shakespeare' (*N.E.D.*).

325. *take up*, make up.

327. *is as horribly conceited*, has as horrible a conception. 'Conceit' is from the same root as 'conceive'. It meant to have a 'conceit', concept, idea.

342. *by the duello*, by the laws of duelling. The Italian *duello* was still in use alongside its English form 'duel', because the word was new to the language. In 1611 Corvat wrote: 'They fought a Duell, that is, a single combat' (quoted *N.E.D.*).

354. *an undertaker*, one who takes upon himself another person's business. In the commercial world it had the sense of an agent or contractor.

362. *reins*, answers the rein.

366. *favour*. Cp. II. iv. 24.

379. *part*, partly.

381. *my having*, what I have, my possessions.

382. *my present*, my present having, what I have at present.

391. *vainness*, bragging, boasting.

399. *venerable*, worthy of veneration, of reverence. It was then possible to 'venerate' a thing without implying that it was old.

402. *good feature*, a fair exterior. A man's 'feature' was his 'make', his shape or figure (O.Fr. *faicture*, Lat. *factura*, make).

404. *the unkind*, the unnatural. When Lear talks of 'unkind daughters' (III. iv. 70) he means that they have no sense of 'kin', no sense of the ties of nature.

410. *so do not I*. She means, I cannot yet believe that what my imagination suggests is true, that my brother is still alive.

415. *couplet*, a pair, a couple. In *Hamlet*, v. i. 309, the twin young ones of the dove are called 'couplets'.

Saws, maxims, proverbs.

416. 417. *I my brother know Yet living in my glass*, i.e. when I look in my glass I see the living image of my brother.

418. *favour*. Cp. I. 366.

420. *if it prove*, if it prove true (see I. 411).

429. *'slid'*: short for 'God's lid'. Cp. 'slight' (II. v. 38).

ACT IV, SCENE I. 12. *Vent my folly!* The Clown's exclamations are puzzling. They should mean that 'vent' was an affected word. But how is this possible when Shakespeare uses it freely in other plays in precisely this sense?

15. *I am afraid . . . a cockney*. A 'cockney' was a 'cockered' child, a mother's darling; hence, a squeamish effeminate fellow, a milksop (*N.E.D.*). The meaning seems to be: I am afraid that squeamish affectation will overspread the world.

16. *unbird thy strangeness*, relax this distant attitude of yours.

19. *foolish Greek*, foolish joker. 'Merry Greek' was a phrase of the time for a merry fellow, a boon companion.

25. *after fourteen years' purchase*. Land is said to be bought at fourteen years' purchase when the price is fourteen times the yearly rent. This was thought in those days an extravagant price. The Clown means, then, that they pay dearly for their good report.

43. *you are well flushed*, i.e. you've done enough for a start. He treats

Sebastian as a 'young soldier' in his first fight, of whom it was said that he then 'fleshed his maiden sword'.

48. *malapert*, saucy.

55. *Rudesby*, rude disorderly fellow.

57. *uncivil*, disorderly, indecent. Cp. II. iii. 134 n.

extent, assault. The word means strictly 'seizure', being a legal term for the seizure of lands, &c., in execution of a royal writ for the recovery of debts due to the Crown.

60. *botch'd up*, awkwardly made up.

62. *Beshrew*, plague upon. So II. iii. 89.

63. *He started one poor heart of mine in thee*, when he touched thee he set one poor heart beating—mine. Editors commonly assume a pun on 'hart' and 'heart'. But you 'started' a hare, not a hart; and in these matters Shakespeare never made mistakes. So Mr. Madden in his *Diary of Master William Silence*, p. 26 n.

64. *What relish is in this?* What does this taste of? reality or wonderland?

66. *Lethe*, the waters of oblivion. *Lethe* was the river of forgetfulness (Gk. *λήθη*) in the under-world of the ancients.

ACT IV, SCENE II. 2. *Sir Topas the curate*. See III. iv. 301 n. The name Sir Topas Shakespeare may have seen in Chaucer.

7. *not tall enough*, &c. Editors are dissatisfied with 'tall'. But we are to imagine a short fat man ludicrously dressed in a long lank gown. 'I am not tall enough,' he says, looking doubtfully at the folds of it, and the audience laughs agreement.

10. *said*, i.e. called.

12. *competitors*, confederates. 'Competitors' are 'people who seek the same thing' (Lat. *com-* (*cum*), together, and *petitor*, fr. *petere*, to seek). They may do this as partners or as rivals. Here as partners; in modern usage always as rivals.

13. *Jove*. Cp. II. v. 189 n.

14. *Bonos diēs*. The Clown's Latin for Good day.

14-16. *the old hermit of Prague . . . a niece of King Gorboduc*. The Clown is at his old game of inventing authorities. Cp. I. v. 38 n. There were hermits of Prague, but never this hermit. There was a legendary Gorboduc, a British king, but his niece is unknown even to legend.

16. *That, that is, is*. He parodies the trite formulae of academic philosophy.

42. *barricadoes*, barricades. The word was a new comer, and still wore its foreign air. Cp. 'duello', III. iv. 342 n.

clerestories, that floor of the building where light was admitted ('clere' = light, lighted).

49. *the Egyptians in their fog*: the 'thick darkness', the darkness that 'might be felt', of Exodus x. 21-3.

52. *abused*, misused. So I. 97, &c.

54. *any constant question*, any regular systematic question.

55. *the opinion of Pythagoras*. Pythagoras was a Greek philosopher (580-504 B. C.), who taught that there is a fixed number of souls in the

world which transmigrate from body to body throughout the whole animal kingdom.

65. *a woodcock*. He selects this bird because of its proverbial foolishness. See II. v. 93.

69. *Nay, I am for all waters*, nay, I am no exquisite, I can turn my hand to anything. The phrase was proverbial in various forms: I can swim in all waters, I have an oar for all waters, &c.

79 f. *Hoy Robin, jolly Robin*. The whole of the song is printed in Percy's *Reliques* (vol. i. p. 184: Everyman's Library).

95. *beside your five wits*, out of your wits: as we say, 'beside yourself.' We were thought to have five wits corresponding to our five senses, viz. common wit (what we call common sense), imagination, fancy, judgement, memory.

99. *But, only*.

101. *propertied me*, treated me as a mere property, a tool, a thing with no will of its own. The metaphor is from the theatre, where actors' appliances are called 'properties'.

105. *Malvolio, Malvolio*. The Clown assumes again the voice of Sir Topas.

106. *endeavour thyself* was a normal early use. Aldis Wright quotes a Collect of the English Church: 'and also daily endeavour ourselves to follow the blessed steps of his most holy life.'

109-11. The Clown ventriloquizes between Sir Topas and himself.

115. *shent*, scolded, reproved (OE. *scendan*, to disgrace).

138. *the old Vice*. The 'Vice' was the leading buffoon in the old moral plays called Interludes.

140 f. *Who with dagger of lath*, &c. In the Interludes there was generally a roaring devil with long claws and tail. It was the duty of the Vice to make fun of him. He belaboured the devil with his 'dagger of lath', bidding him pare his nails, and so on. Cp. *Henry V*, IV. iv. 74: 'this roaring devil i' the old play, that every one may pare his nails with a wooden dagger.'

ACT IV, SCENE III. 6. *found this credit*, found this belief current, found it credited. Cp. 'trust', I. 15.

12. *instance*, example.

discourse, course of reasoning. 'Discourse' is the motion of the mind from one judgement to another (Lat. *discursus*), the operation of the mind in reasoning.

15. *trust*, conviction. Cp. 'credit', I. 6.

18. *Take and give back affairs and their dispatch*, take up affairs and give them back dispatched; in other words, take them in hand and dispatch them. There is a forced symmetry of verb and object. 'Take' goes with 'affairs', and 'give back' with 'their dispatch'.

21. *deceivable*, deceptive. Such adjectives in *-ble* could then be used either actively (as here) or passively; now only passively.

24. *chantry*, private chapel.

29. *whiles*, until. So 'while then' = till then (*Macbeth*, III. i. 44).

come to note, come to be known.

30. *what time*, when.

ACT V, SCENE I. 22. *abused, deceived, misled.*

22 f. *so that, conclusions to be as kisses, &c.* My foes, says the Clown, rebuff me; my friends comply with me; I am therefore the worse for my foes and the better for my friends. For, as in logic two negatives make an affirmative, so, among lovers, two refusals mean consent, two rebuffs mean compliance. Or, to state it in terms of kisses, the four lips of your lovers, repeated negatives notwithstanding, comply together and make two affirmatives in a kiss. If, then, this blessed conclusion is what rebuffing leads to, I am the better for my foes, who rebuff me, and the worse for my friends, who comply with me.

The idea of the Clown's syllogism was a common one. Farmer quotes from *Lust's Dominion* (anon.: c. 1590): '*Queen.* Come, let's kiss. *Moor.* Away, away. *Queen.* No, no, says Aye: and twice away says stay.'

35. *your grace, your virtuous inclination.*

36. *it, my ill counsel.*

39. *Primo, &c., i. e. First Act, Second Act, Third Act.*

40. *the triplex*, a measure in triple time. The galliard and coranto spoken of in I. iii. were in the *triplex*.

41. *the bells of Saint Bennet.* They had a triple chime: one, two, three. There may have been an old rhyme about them, or, as Aldis Wright suggests, they may be the bells of St. Bennet Hithe, Paul's Wharf, just opposite the Globe Theatre where Shakespeare and his company acted.

45. *at this throw*, at this cast: as we speak of a 'throw' at dice.

58. *baubling*, or 'baubling', means paltry (from 'bauble'). (p. *Cymbeline*, III. i. 26-7: 'His shipping—poor ignorant baubles!—Like egg-shells mov'd upon their surges.'

59. *unprizable*, valueless.

60. *scathful*, damaging, destructive.

61. *bottom*, vessel: a shipping term.

62. *the tongue of loss*, the voices of the losers themselves.

65. *fraught*, freight.

from Candy, on its way from Candia, from Crete.

68. *desperate of shame and state*, like a desperate man, reckless of appearances and of his condition.

69. *brabble*, brawl.

70. *drew*, drew his sword.

75. *so dear*, so heart-burning. 'Dear' is used by Shakespeare of anything, whether pleasing or the reverse, which touches the heart nearly. So peril is 'dear' (*Timon of Athens*, v. i. 231), exile is 'dear' (*Richard II.*, I. iii. 151), groans are 'dear' (*Love's Labour's Lost*, v. ii. 872), offences are 'dear' (*Henry V.*, II. ii. 181), &c.

83. *wrack*, wreck.

87. *pure*, purely.

95. *recommended*, entrusted.

113. *fat and fulsome*. On these words readers who can eat no fat need no note.

117. *ingrate*, ungrateful. So 'ingrateful', I. 81.

122. *Like to the Egyptian thief*. This was the pirate Thyamis in

the third-century Greek romance, *Theagenes and Chariclea*, by Heliodorus: a romance so popular in translation that Shakespeare could hardly have failed to know it. Thyamis fell in love with Chariclea, whom he had captured along with her lover Theagenes; and finding himself at the last stand, determined to kill her rather than leave her behind. This, says the story, was the custom of these barbarians, 'when they despaired of their own safety, first to make away with those whom they held dear, and desired for companions in the next world.'

125. *non-regardance*, disregard.

130. *tender*, care for, regard.

136. *joyant*, *apt*, and *willingly* are adverbs. The one adverbial ending does for all three. Cp. *Julius Caesar*, II. i. 226: 'Good gentlemen, look fresh and merrily'; *Richard II*, I. iii. 3: 'sprightly and bold.'

apt, readily.

137. *To do you rest*, to give you rest, to ease you.

151. *strangle thy propriety*, choke and suppress thy proper self, thy identity. Cp. *Othello*, II. iii. 176: 'Silence that dreadful bell! it frights the isle From her propriety' (i. e. shakes her identity, makes her unlike her proper self).

164. *compact*. Accent 'compáct'.

165. *in my function*, in the discharge of my function as priest.

168-9. *O, thou dissembling cub! . . . thy case*. If the fox cub is so wily, says the Duke, what will the old grizzled fox be like? The fox's skin was, in hunting language, his 'case'.

175. *little faith*, for 'a little faith'. The article was often omitted where we insert it. Cp. II. v. 125 *n*.

185. *inordinate*. The reader can supply the right word.

187. *Od's blessings!* Another form of Rosalind's 'Od's my little life!' (*As You Like It*, III. v. 43). 'Od's' is for 'God's'.

199. *other gates*, otherwise: still in dialect use.

205. *Sot*, dunce. Cp. I. v. 128 *n*.

207. *set*, set in his head.

208. *a passy-measures pavin*. This was the English name for the Italian *passamezzo piovano*, a dance in slow time, thus described in a seventeenth-century MS.: 'two singles and a double forward, and two singles side, reprynce back.' Mr. Halliwell, after quoting this description, remarks very shrewdly: 'it is only necessary to read this, and have seen a drunken man, to be well aware why Dick is called a "passy-measures pavin".'

214, 215. Sir Toby, between drink and pain, loses all patience with Sir Andrew and abuses him to his face.

227. *perspectacle*, optical delusion glass (see I. 275). Hence 'that is and is not'. Accent 'perspective'.

237, 238. *Not can there be . . . here and everywhere*, I have no divine power of omnipresence.

240. *of charity*, out of charity tell me.

244. *suted*, dressed.

247. *dimension*, corporal dimension, bodily frame.

248. *participate*, partake of, as the common heritage of men.

249. *goes even*, agrees without a flaw.

256. *record*. Accent 'recórd'.
259. *lets*, hinders.
260. *usurp'd*. Cp. I. v. 199 n.
262. *jump*, fall pat, tally. 'Jump' was also used as an adverb in the sense of 'pat', 'exactly': e.g. 'jump at this dead hour' (*Hamlet* I. i. 65).
265. *weeds*, garments.
267. *occurrence*. We should say 'occurrences'.
274. *amaz'd*, confounded, distracted. The word had a stronger meaning then.
- right noble is his blood*. The Duke must have known about his father, Sebastian of Messina.
275. *as yet the glass seems true*. Cp. I. 227 n.
281. *that orb'd continent*, the sun.
290. *distract*, distracted.
291. *Extracting*, that withdraws my mind from everything else; in fact, distracting. The word was suggested by 'distract' of l. 290. It occurs nowhere else in this sense.
297. *it skills not*, it makes no difference.
302. *delivers the madman*, utters him, reports what he says.
307. *you must allow vox*, you must allow expression, you must allow me to read it with expression. The Clown had begun to read with the tone of a madman. The Latin *vox*, meaning 'voice', meant also 'accent', 'tone', 'pronunciation'. It was probably a term in the handbooks of rhetoric.
310. *perpend*, weigh, ponder: an affected word, used only by Pistol, Polonius, &c.
332. *apt*, ready: the original sense. Cp. I. 136.
333. *quits you*, discharges you.
344. *from it*, differently from it.
355. *geek*, simpleton, dupe.
361. *cam'st*, thou cam'st. The pronoun was often dropped in speech. So 'hadst it?' (II. iii. 27). 'Art any more than a steward?' (II. iii. 124).
- 362, 363. *presuppos'd Upon thee in the letter*, i.e. pointed out to you in the letter on the supposition that you would assume them after you had read it.
364. *This practice hath most shrewdly pass'd upon thee*, this stratagem has most cruelly imposed upon thee.
- 373, 374. *Upon some stubborn and uncourteous parts*, &c., in consequence of some stubborn and uncourteous features in the man that we had taken exception to. The sentence is difficult, I think imperfect, from hasty writing.
375. *importance*, importunacy, importunity. So 'important' = importunate, urgent, in *Hamlet*, III. iv. 108: 'the important acting of your dread command.'
376. *he hath married her*. When? It is only about half an hour since we left him drunk and bleeding, tottering to bed.
378. *pluck on*, bring after it, in its train.
380. *poor fool!* Not contemptuous, but pitiful.
- baffled*. Cp. II. v. 176.

383. *thrown*. The Clown's memory is not perfect.

384. *interlude*. Cp. iv. ii. 138 and 140 *n*.

386. '*Madam, why laugh you,*' &c. This is I. v. 89 f.

391. *abus'd*. Cp. I. 22.

394. *convents*, convenes us, summons us together.

401 f. *When that I was*, &c. A typical clown song of the time. For songs like this clowns needed no help from Shakespeare.



